■ Sports / A25
New England Patriots win Super Bowl

■ Business / B1
Peso hits 19-month high of 54.52:$1

■ Metro / A21
11 cops linked to dismissed NBI agent sacked

■ Across / A17
Misuari's men kill 12 soldiers in Jolo fighting

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Year of the Rooster: Buenas para sa 'Pinas?

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Sunday, February 6, 2005 ◆ 36 pages / vol. 20 / no. 63 — website: www.inq7.net

Ash maker finds deeper Ash Wednesday meaning

By Christian V. Esguerra

TOMORROW will be an ordinary Ash Wednesday for 66-year-old Maximilian Zumaia.

The day will mark his 17th year as resident "ash maker" of the Santísimo Rosario parish chapel on Espeleta Avenue, Manila.

As in previous Ash Wednesdays, Mang

A10 / B1

Year of Rooster not for get-rich schemes

By George Sison
Contributor

AT 8:09 a.m. tomorrow, the rooster comes and announces the start of its reign. The Year of the Monkey is

FENG SHUI

MANGUITO Zosia, resident "ash maker" of the Santísimo Rosario parish chapelin Manila, prepares the main ingredient for tomorrow's Ash Wednesday ritual. ERIC ALBERT

US decision upheld our ruling–Davide

Solon warns gov't of 'secret deal' with Marcoses

By Philip C. Tubeza

IT WAS nothing less than an act of respect for Philippine sovereignty.

"I don't have to elaborate on that. The best evidence would be the decision itself," Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. said yesterday, reacting to the US court's ruling that its silence recognized the Philippine Supreme Court's decision on forfeiting in the state $660 million in assets of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"The sovereignty of the Philippine Republic, more particularly that of the judgment of the Supreme Court, has been duly respected," Davide said in an ambush interview. "Let the execution of the decision be done according to the decision."

Inexplicably, the US court ruling had also been profusely welcomed by former first lady Imelda Marcos—among a number of Congress to suspect that some shadowy deal may be afoot.

"Mrs. Marcos can now pursue a secret deal with the Arroyo administration, especially today that Da Marcos stealing billion is not yet recovered," Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano said.

Mariano recalled that in 1993, the Presidential Commission on Good Government,

CLICK TO ENLARGE / A4

MARTIAL law victims Virgie Campos and Maria Milan Enriquez declare victory in last week's ruling by a US appellate court on their case against the Marcos estate. ARCHIVE PHOTO

Opposition still settling Ping, Edong conflict

By Christine O. Avendaño

NO DECISION has been reached to exclude Sen. Edgardo "Edong" Angara from efforts of opposition groups to unify into one bloc, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said yesterday.

Estrada said that was what his father, former President Joseph Estrada, told him when they talked over the phone yesterday about an increasingly heated spooling the latter as saying that opposition groups were considering excluding our negara.

"I just talked to my father just this afternoon and he informed me that there was nothing final, and that they were even encouraging moves to [settle] the differences between Senators Estrada ("Ping") Lacson and Angara," the young Estrada told reporters.

Asked by the business scholars he was supporting this particular, the senator replied in the affirmative. "I'll go for the punching up between the two as that we in the opposition can enjoy a harmonious relationship," he said.

Angara, president of Lakas ng Bansang Isinulong Pilipino (LBP), said he could not be expelled because he did not belong to the Partido ng Maunlad Pilipino, the party of the former President.

The LDP president said the opposition got together during the presidential election in 2004 when he organized the Nacionalista Bagkalusang Pilipino (NBP), which supported the candidacy of Fernando Poe Jr.

"But when the elections ended, the NBP self-destructed, especially when FPJ died," Angara said.

He said Estrada's statements against him

CONTINUED / A4

Chinese mining investors dismiss NPA threats

COMMUNIST guerrillas have warned that foreign mining activities in rebel-influenced areas faced potential armed attacks, but Chinese businessmen seeking to invest in a nickel project in the country are undaunted.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) insisted the threat would remain in the mid-hand re-

sources sector after the Supreme Court upheld a law opening the industry to foreign investors.

"We will not allow mining companies to operate inside guerrilla fronts," CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said yesterday on radio dzRH.

"If they [mining firms] insist on the massive destruction of the environment, our forces are sure to launch all available means to paralyze their operations and force them out of the guerrilla zones," Rosal said.

The CPP leads the 8,000-member New People's Army (NPA), which has been waging a 36-year Maoist-style campaign to establish areas of the countryside. The government suspended peace talks with the communist last year.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), fighting for over three decades for an independent state in areas it considers Moro homeland, on the other hand, is demanding that the local community get a share.

Many of the known but as yet unde-

CONTINUED / A4

Tribal leaders become 'barefoot docs'

By DJ Yap
INQ Research

TO THE Negritos of Guimbitan in Mansalay, Oriental Mindoro, a pregnancy ends with complications means 28 km on foot through a densely forested hill toward a national highway, and another 132 km on wheels to the general hospital.

Many such cases end on a tragic and bloody note: Mother and baby are left to die in the mountains.

Fatal childbirths are not all that the Negritos dread.

A simple case of diarrhea can trigger an outbreak, as it did two years ago, killing nine people. Measles, tuberculosis and hepatitis also pose an even greater threat.

Norma Siangco has seen many of her people die of ailments that normally take only a few pills or routine shots to prevent. She has always felt helpless in the face of basic frequent tragedies.

Now thanks to a medical boondocker, Georgia may finally be able to do something. She joined 29 other leaders and representatives of ethnic groups from all over the Philippines at a three-

CONTINUED / A4

Mountaineer dies in trek on Makiling

By Nikko Dizon and Marlon Ramos
INQ Southern Luzon Bureau

THEY heard the voices of children and the sound of a rushing river.

But there were no children and all they found was a dead river.

"We were lost. My thought was heard children's playing so we followed the sound of their voices, thinking they could lead us back to the road. But all we saw was a dead river. There were no children. Everything was just still," mountaineer Alfredo Tenorio told the Inquirer.

Moments later, while negotiating a steep slope on Mt. Makiling, Tenorio's companions, Ramonito Hipolito and Carlos Antonio, tripped and fell. The rock footholds had given way because of the soft soil.

Tenorio, 53, managed to grab a vine and save himself, while Hipolito fell headfirst some 400 meters.

Hearing Ramon' scream, Tenorio, 53, who had walked several meters ahead of the pair, rushed back, sliding down the slope.

Tenorio said Ramonito was still alive when he reached him, but blood was trickling from his mouth and he had a

CONTINUED / A4

Jewish refugees honor 4 brothers, Filipinos

CINCINNATI—At the front took power in Germany and the world savored its hate on Jewish refugees, four brothers who ran a cigar factory in the Philippines worked quietly to help 1,200 Jews flee to Manila.

The Fessler brothers, who have since died, never talked about their part in the little-known rescue. But some 65 years later, the now-thriving refugees want the world to know: Philip, Alex, Morris and Herbert Fessler achieved.

"The Fessler brothers were just ordinary Jewish businessmen, but they were out of their way to save lives," said Frank Ephraim, who was 6 years old when his family fled to Manila from Germany in 1939.

"No one made them do it. They just did what they thought was right," Ephraim said.

The four Fessler brothers from Cincinnati had taken turns going to Manila for two-year periods during the 1930s and 1940s to run the Philippine Cigar Factory, started by their father in 1918.

While they were in Manila, the brothers

CONTINUED / A4

THE FESSLER brothers—(from left), Morris, Herbert, Philip, Henry and Alex—are shown in a family photo in 1926 in Cincinnati. They operated a factory in the pre-war Philippines that helped rescue 1,200 Jewish refugees from Nazi thumps.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2005

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

2 solons suspended in ₱2.5M case

By Armando N. Mercado and Carlito Pablo

The SANDIGANBAYAN yesterday slapped a 90-day suspension on two incumbent congressmen, a former governor and a provincial board member in connection with a ₱2.5-million alleged anomaly involving the provincial government of Oriental Mindoro in 1997.

Suspended were Representatives Rodolfo Valencia and Alfonso Umali, of the first and second districts of Oriental Mindoro, respectively, for offenses they allegedly committed while Valencia was governor and Umali, provincial administrator.

Also suspended were former Governor Reynaldo Umali and Boardmember Isaac Lejano.

The 90-day suspension, which was filed before the antigraft court in 1997, will be in effect while the case is being heard.

In a 14-page resolution, the special sixth Division directed the Office of the Ombudsman (Mindoro) through Special Prosecution Officer Jesus Arnaiz to implement the order on Valencia and Reyes.

The accused were charged last of P50,000 each.

The prosecution, however, Umali and Lejano are directed to cease and desist from exercising the functions and privileges of their respective positions for 90 days immediately upon receipt of the resolution," the antigraft court said.

In its resolution, Justice Gregory Ong, Jose Hernandez and Rodolfo Ignacio granted the request of the prosecutors to suspend the accused and upheld the charges filed by the Ombudsman.

"Undoubtedly by acting as they accept public office, they can be suspended pending litigation. It matters not that they are charged with acts or omissions committed while they were still holding public positions other than those they are presently occupying," the court said.

Investigators said the accused allegedly made it appear in connivance with other persons in entering into an illegally anomalous contract with an engineer Alfredo Asinas, to whom the provincial government under Valencia issued P2.5 million in public funds for the purpose of repairing, operating and maintaining the latter's private roll-on roll-off cargo vessel in January 1994.

The vessel was supposedly used to transport goods to people hit by floods in Oriental Mindoro at the time.

The case hit a snag after the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order in favor of the accused in May 2000, but this was lifted in June 2004.

Those who stood as witnesses against the four were former Governor Rodolfo Fontanilla, Provincial Treasurer Leonardo Cruz, and three other ranking provincial officials.

A Sandiganbayan sheriff, however, declared the suspension order has been referred to the lower chamber's legal department for "study."

The same order will have to be evaluated subsequently by the House committee on rules, which Nograles chairs, before it is eventually submitted, if at all, to the House committee on ethics.

Cam said it is the House ethics committee which has the jurisdiction on matters of disciplinary action against members of the House, Nograles said.

Nograles said cases of recommendation for suspension by the same committee reach the approval of the House membership voting by plenary.

Nograles, a lawyer, stressed that by operation of the separation of powers between the executive, legislative and judicial branches, the suspension order on Valencia and Umali cannot be enforced immediately.

Black prop, DPWH chief says of raps against him

By Jerome Aning and Carlito Pablo

PUBLIC Works Secretary Victorino Soriquez yesterday said people in the agency affected by his bidding were using black propaganda to discredit and ultimately oust him.

Soriquez was reacting to reports that he had allegedly demanded P100,000 from each of the 16 Department of Public Works and Highways regional directors for the purchase of lampposts he plans to be placed along the national highways.

The secretary clarified that he never solicited any money from the directors and recounted that in his meeting with them last week, all he did was to tell that the rules and regulations of national highways be observed to obviate become most of them were lax.

"Of course, what's in my mind is that I may be running over some people because of the reforms I've been implementing," he told reporters, when asked who he thought was responsible for the black propaganda.

Soriquez said, his latest "reform" is the removal of many bureaucrats, some people, and his recent transfer of personnel from the DPWH's comptrollership and management services.

He said he found out that 80 percent of the personnel were senior working to clear value added and estate taxes on the phantom engaged by the affluent.

Those proposals are embodied in House bill Nos. 2805 and 2067 authored by Reps. Eduardo Gullas, Abraham Mitra (LP, Palawan) and Catalino Figueroa (KBL, Misamis Samar), respectively.

In his bill, Mitra identified a number of goods and services which he proposed to slap a 30 percent value-added tax and a 20 percent excise tax.

Mitra listed the following as "non-essential" goods to be taxed: perfumes and toilet waters, perfumes and other goods included in chocolate preparations such as but not limited to cosmetic surgeries and body enhancement services."

In short, this latter category includes beauty enhancement procedures like liposuction and the like.

According to Mitra's estimates, this bill could raise P5 billion.

In the bill, Figueroa wants a 15 percent VAT and 20 percent excise tax on "informed" goods and appliances."

These include high-priced carpets made of wool or fine animal hair, bedsets, photographic equipment, video cameras, microwave ovens and television sets with picture tube bigger than 21 inches.

Salonga named P2.5 million in public funds for the purpose of repairing, operating and maintaining the latter's private roll-on roll-off cargo vessel in January 1994.

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NO TO BUDGET CUT

Students of the University of the Philippines-Manila clash with antiriot police armed in front of the Senate building yesterday after they tried to enter the chamber to register their protest to cuts in the university's budget.

Gay wedding OK, says Satur

WE TIMES they really are a changing.

This according to Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo, who was reacting to the first gay marriage in the New People's Army between Ka Andres and Ka Jose which took place last week in Compostela Valley.

Ocampo is a former peace negotiator for the National Democratic Front, the political arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

"That's the way of the 21st century," he said with a smile.

"That is already a reality in Europe and in many liberal countries although that is the first time it is being practiced in the communist movement."

Asked if he would file a bill to legalize the practice, Ocampo said it would be a long shot because he considered the issue "subsumed."

"Right now, in general, the people's main concern was the promotion of reproductive health care and, if possible, legalizing a divorce law," Carolina O. Ralmoto

WHO checking RP ability to respond to chem warfare

By Blanche S. Rivera

A TEAM from the World Health Organization is in the Philippines to assess the country's preparedness to respond to the "deliberate use of biological and chemical agents" to spread disease.

Eight members of the WHO's Program for Preparedness for Disaster Epidemics flew in from Geneva, Switzerland, to open a two-day workshop for the country's emergency response personnel from the Department of Health, National Disaster Coordinating Council and National Security Council.

The Philippines is the fourth country to be visited by the WHO team since the agency started to equip developing countries with tools to help improve health systems.

In a conference dated May 31, 2002, the WHO pledged to help its member countries improve their health systems, giving particular attention to disease surveillance and technology and communication and psychological considerations of emergencies.

The conference came eight months after the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York, which killed more than 3,000 people.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said the WHO assured it to make sure its members were ready to respond to "deliberate epidemics" caused by biological and chemical agents.

A joint WHO-Department of Health workshop for Philippine emergency management experts opened at the Shangrila Hotel in Makati City yesterday.

Four assessment teams—three in Manila and one in Davao—would be formed to conduct field testing in hospitals and other institutions concerned with disaster management, the DOH said.

The field testing involves a preliminary questionnaire and analysis, an introductory workshop and preliminary assessment, field visits, a report debriefing workshop and follow up.

'That yacht's gonna cost you'

By Carlito Pablo

IN THIS scenario, it's only the rich who will be taxed.

The House ways and means committee will start today deliberations on two proposed measures seeking to slap value added and estate taxes on the phantom engaged by the affluent.

Those proposals are embodied in House bill Nos. 2805 and 2067 authored by Reps. Eduardo Gullas, Abraham Mitra (LP, Palawan) and Catalino Figueroa (KBL, Misamis Samar), respectively.

In his bill, Mitra identified a

Probe of Lapids over quarrying in Pampanga sought

By Cynthia Balana and Michael Lim Ubac

PAMPANGA Rep. Gen Ring Guiao and three congressmen have sought congressional investigation of Gov. Lito Lapid and Vice Governor Jun Mark Lapid, for alleged misuse revenues of the provincial government amounting to P327 million.

Senator Lapid was governor of the province of this province from 2001 to 2004 before he was succeeded by his son.

Guiao, together with party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva of the Citizens' Battle Against Corruption (Cibac), an Mayor Rep. Florencio Noel and Bataan Rep. Herminio Roman, filed a joint resolution in the House of Representatives last week to look into the alleged misuse of the provincial government's share in the collection of taxes and fees, as well as the control and supervision of quarrying in river systems and embankments areas in the lahar-affected provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales occurred in local government units by virtue of Presidential Decree issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Guiao, a son of the late Pampanga Gov. Bren Guiao, said the alleged irregularities would have not prospered with-out the knowledge of administrative officials under the governor's office as well as the provincial treasurer.

Guiao said his lawyers were gathering more evidence before deciding on what charges to file against the culprits.

"We are not really after putting somebody in jail. All we have to do is put everything in the media so the appropriate agencies like the Office of the Ombudsman can act on this," Guiao said.

To prove his point, Guiao presented to the media samples of rubber he claimed to be some of those made of lahar receipts issued in the provincial government in the course of the quarrying transactions which his office was able to gather.

Guiao, who was the vice-governor during the province last year, was a member of the provincial board at the time. He said, he had no hand in the quarry transactions as those were under the jurisdiction of the governor's office.

He said the alleged kickbacks had a different format and were stamped as "used" unlike the genuine receipts which had handwritten figures and details of the transactions on them.

Each receipt issued by the provincial government was for an administrative service fee and a sand fee amounting to P350 each, or a total of P700.

Guiao said the National Printing Office had issued the receipts exclusively to the provincial government.

Guiao also said that the average of 2,000 to 3,000 truckloads of sand, gravel and other natural resources were being extracted and hauled every day from the different quarry sites in the province.

The Natural Resources and Development Corp. (NRDC), the corporate arm of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, was the collecting agent of the national government from 1995 to 2004.

During the three-year period, NRDC was able to collect P362 million in revenues from these operations, P181 million of which went to the barangays and town of Pampanga in their share from the provincial government.

In 2004, the collection of quarry taxes and fees, as well as the control and supervision of quarrying in river systems and embankments areas in the lahar-affected provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales reverted to local government units by virtue of Presidential Decree issued by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

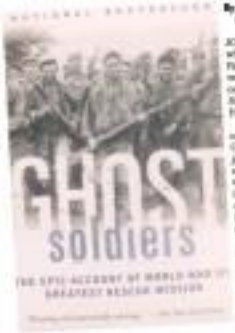
From 2001 to 2005, the provincial government was only able to collect P45 million.

ALLEGED fake quarry receipt

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Lourdes C. Caminos
Associate Editor Bernadette E. Velarde

The bestseller as film material



By Pablo A. Tariman
Contributor

JOHN Dahl's "The Great Raid" which stars Benjamin Bratt, Joseph Fiennes, James Franco and our very own Cesar Montano is based on the best-selling book "Ghost Soldiers," by American novelist Hampton Sides.

The setting is a concentration camp in Barangay Pangatian in Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija. The story is of a daring rescue of some 513 prisoners of war (mostly Americans) led by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Muller (played by Bratt) and Robert Prince (Franco) as assault commanders.

Two Filipinos figure in the historic rescue: the late Maria Roja Cruz Eduardo Jason (then captain and leader of Squadron 212 of the guerilla fighters) and Captain Juan Pajota (Montano), who helped save real life mission.

On Jan. 30, the province observed the 60th anniversary of that rescue with US Ambassador Frances Ricciardone and Sides in attendance.

"Just as we stood together here 60 years ago," said Ricciardone, "today we stand together to protect freedom. Our partnership runs deep, based on shared values and the blood shed in that battlefield."

In Nueva Ecija alone, a recruited 2,500 Filipino and American soldiers perished in the war.

Son Tomas Joson III, son of the late Capt. Joson, said he learned about the heroic rescue only through Sides' book.

HAMPTON Sides and Cesar Montano

'Ghost Soldiers' by Hampton Sides is such a great read, you wonder if its movie version, 'The Great Raid,' would live up to it

Riveting, patriotic

The New York Times described the book as "riveting and particularly stirring." The Wall Street Journal said it was a "great war story." David Halberstam (author of "Playing for Keeps" and "The Best and the Brightest") noted that the Cabanatuan story was "told with skill and intelligence," and concluded that "Ghost Soldiers" belonged to the same shelf as General Hal Moore's and Joe Galloway's "We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young" and Mark Bowden's "Black Hawk Down."

Sides' heroic called "Ghost Soldiers" an "extraordinary tale of bravery under fire and the will to endure."

Certainly it was a well-planned operation staged by rangers trained for their most dangerous assignments: it was a big success largely because of the big role played by two Filipino guerilla leaders, the late Capt. Joson and Pajota, who was then a sergeant.

At the time of the raid, Capt. Joson—who would become provincial governor after the Liberation—was in his mid-30s. He was described in the book as a "tenacious politician with a knack for guerilla persuasion" and "a broad smile full of good teeth."

Pajota, on the other hand, is "stern looking man of thirty years" who wore an old khaki uniform of the US army of the far East (Inset).

Robert Lapham, the American guerilla leader, recalled that Pajota was quiet and sinewy, but had a tough streak. "He was a very enthusiastic guy with a natural born for leadership," Sides quoted Lapham as saying. "He was resourceful, organized, and extremely imaginative. He was from Nueva Ecija and knew it like a book."

Getaway by carabao

When Pajota learned of the impending raid of the Pangatian camp in Cabanatuan, he advised Muller to postpone it for at least 24 hours. Pajota suggested that, before the actual raid, an American fighter plane should buzz the camp—but not shoot—just to divert the attention of the Japanese guards. The camp has an airfield upon certain and the rescuers had no way of of finding right before the actual attack.

Formerly attached to the 91st Philippine Infantry, Pajota had been out all from Philippine-American forces during the retreat to Bataan but had perfected his skills as a saboteur and hit-and-run artist. The Japanese could not keep up with him. Teaming up with Lapham, he conducted reconnaissance surveys and ambushes and organized a guerilla force of 300 well-trained men answerable only to him.

Thus Pajota was perfect for the assignment said. According to the book, Pajota

CAPT. Robert Prince, assault commander

LT COL. Henry Muller, battalion commander

Kissing parties

POSSIBLY the biggest gathering of the country's best musical performers happens on Feb. 11 in one very busy hour venue—the Araneta Coliseum—as Close-Up's Valentine event, "Loveparalysa 2."

Manilenos can come to the Araneta Boulevard Skywalk, hint and gesture to performances by Sharon, Jessa Zaragoza, Kyla, Gabe Mfume, the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philippine Symphonic Band, folk, local blues and the Episode band. Acoustic Joe and Acoustic Rio Rosa. Drew Arellano, Iza Villania, John Prats, Dimples King and Tom Manzanes are the evening's hosts.

The Harbinger Mac Arthur Highway in Angeles, Pampanga, will shake with the musical stylings of Rivermaya, Wolfgang, Allyn Perez, Jimmy Bondoc, Rayd Marquez and Yeng Constantino.

The Hardinge

Tribal leaders become 'barefoot docs'

From page A1

work training to become "barefoot doctors" in their communities.

The foundation of Our Lady of Peace Missions Inc., a medical charity institution based in Pasitnayan City, gathered together leaders of 22 minority groups from as far north as the Batanes city of Basipunt to as far south as the Tawi-Tawi of Basilan.

Child delivery, LBM

Led by Dr. Eva Maniwa, a physician and the foundation's president, the training was conducted from Jan. 17 to Feb. 5.

The trainees included volunteer medical practitioners from the Our Lady of Peace Hospital and other medical institutions, including the Philippine General Hospital and the Manila Doctors Hospital.

The tribe leaders learned basic skills and knowledge in primary healthcare, such as first aid, child delivery and treatment of common diseases or ailments, such as loose bowel movement.

They were also given medical kits containing stethoscope, blood pressure apparatus, a basic surgical set, scissors, forceps and gloves, among other items.

PGS. Int overhead: Knowledge. Emergency is hopeful she can help prevent the spread of treatable and preventable diseases in her 1,000-strong barangay.

Medical missions by charitable groups sometimes visit Guimiras to tend to the sick, but these missions are once-a-year events because of the rough terrain, she said.

"It takes two to three days before they arrive, and they have to cross bodies of water," she said, speaking in Filipino. The climb up the Manila Hill is very difficult because of the terrain, she added.

Inferiority complex

Aida Jalimasin, a leader of the Iranun tribe of Cabatuan, Zamboanga City, said the reason for their lack of awareness in treating and preventing sickness lay not just in the inaccessibility of their community, but also in their lack of education.

For example, she said, they did not know personal hygiene and how it contributed to one's health.

Sanghing Sinpaching of the Thadi of Simeh Gumbam, said their ancestors and parents did not want to send them to school because of inferiority complex.

Thanks to the training program, they now have a better chance to combat disease, she said.

The outside world

Oddly enough, members of the tribute communities sometimes get sick when they go to urban settlements.

A tribe leader described how one of his people was struck down by a strain of hepatitis after going to the city and eating at a "turo-turo" (sidewalk eatery).

Maniwa said she was very happy with how the seminar turned out, expressing optimism that the tribe leaders would pass on what they had learned to their communities.

A star is born

"I thought we would have problems because there were 30 of them, but they were very attentive to the lessons, and they showed how much they have learned from the seminar," she said.

GOME of the leader trainees from tribal groups (From left, first row) Gloria Pedacio, Sangping Tangnaling, Norma Ibanga, Aida Jalimasin, Perlene Banda, (second row) Hector Bidan and Julie Sagaig.

Tribe leaders quickly bonded with each other in the three weeks they were together.

"They even formed an organization of their own, the child's ask them to do that," Maniwa said.

Another positive outcome from the event was something Maniwa did not expect.

"One of them told me, 'Since, do you know that back home, if you go to Manila, you're famous. But if you stay three weeks in Manila, you're a star!'"

Being a star among her people is the last thing on Alangpet's mind.

When she returns home, she will be happy with the knowledge that, though illnesses may and will still fall on Cuimiras, she and her people will no longer feel so helpless.

US decision upheld our ruling–Davide

From page A1

need into a compassionate agreement with the Marcoses for a global settlement of the Marcos assets found on a 75-25 sharing in favor of the government. In effect, the Marcoses would be made immune from criminal and civil prosecution.

The Supreme Court ruled that deal.

Motions vested President Macapagal-Arroyo against seeking any compromise with the Marcoses without first consulting the people, particularly the victims of atrocities during martial law.

She said the Marcos widow could exploit the compromise to weak local politicians of the government to increase her leverage in seeking a deal.

The Philippine legal team"s strategy became final on Nov. 18, 2003 when it rejected the Marcoses' tireless for reconsideration.

P1.1B for victims

Congress has yet to determine the amount of compensation the Marcos victims would get.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile warned Malacañang that it could not release the P200 million, or P11.1 billion, compensation that Congress was now working on.

Enrile, who commented on Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye's statement that Malacañang had ordered the budget department to allot P6 billion from the proceeds of the three recoveries, the domestic

Marcos, who guaranteed one of those compensation bills in the Senate, asked where Bunye got the amount of P6 billion when the money being deliberated on in Congress spoke of P200 million.

Is there 'Supit'?

"Mr. Bunye, who (believes in) about any subject under the sun but who knows next to nothing about the pure of legislation, is trying to make 'Supit' (Sixto) Pi billion from the refund to inflate the funds of the National Treasury," enrile said in a statement.

It is nonsensus like these that get Mr. Arroyo into trouble, the senate's senator said.

"It's not because of what she does in spite but because of what her entourage substitutes do, say, and hatches," he said.

The senator said Swiss authorities had assured even to the Philippines the Marcos money on the understanding that a portion of it would go to the Marcos victims.

"The $200 million is not included in the ongoing 2005 budget deliberations because it is a special appropriation measure with a built-in funding," Arroyo said. "And liberalizing to make payment (by way) might end it."

"No way can that be refused by the executive, or by the absence, Finance Secretary Gene Pestaina, who at the height of the ... budget deliberations, has been on perfect inclination to do so in the senate," Arroyo said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said the compensation measure would be reintroduced by plenary debate after the budget deliberations.

Pangilinan said ensuring the Marcos victims would be the "first hope" for the victims.

'Psychic payment'

"Payment of compensation does not merely represent financial transactions, but the psychic payment and closure to a very chapter in our history," he said.

"We cannot quantify in money terms the lives that have been lost during the dictatorship. This is both an issue of justice and accountability. Given into the memory inside this compensation. In effect the state must account for these acts."

Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales, chair of the House committee on human rights, said the P10-billion recovery was just but a victory for the 9,500 human rights claimants because it was the Philippine Supreme Court's decision to forfeit the Marcos money to the government.

She said the Supreme Court decision was in line with a resolution set by them, earlier than that a portion of the money be used to indemnify the victims.

Malacañang yesterday announced it would honor the government's commitment to compensate the victims.

"The (the victims) have waited too long and have endured protracted legal battles to there is no more room for government further delay in their compensation," Bunye said.

The presidential spokesman said Malacañang would instruct the Commission on Agrarian Reform Law, which mandates that all proceeds from the Marcos wealth shall go to agrarian reform.

Victory, not defeat

Human rights leader Rizie Hilao-Enriquez, one of those who suffered under Marcos, also declared that the US court decision was a defeat for the claimants.

Hilao-Enriquez, head of the rights groups Selda and Karapatan, said in an interview that Marcos victims who were awarded compensation by a Hawaii court in 1995 over the California appellate court's decision.

"There's no longer any downside to the way of President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise to compensate the victims of martial law," she said.

With the dictator's assets safely in the hands of the state, Karapatan and the government should now honor its "moral obligations."

"I don't know what's the big deal. It seems Judge (Manuel) Real feel still with the appellate court's decision rules so but, we didn't expect it," she said.

She said the appellate court did not overturn the Hawaii court's original decision that Marcos was guilty of human rights violations and that his widow Imelda was also implicated. With reports from Cynthia D. Balana, Christine O. Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac, Juliet Labog-Javier and Norman Bordadora

SISTERS (from left) Peggy Golnick, Susan Stern and Jane Ellis pose by a photo showing them as young girls at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. Their father, Morris Fender, helped save Jewish refugees in Nazi-Eur ope.

Jewish refugees honor 4 brothers, Filipinos

From page A1

established a Jewish Refugee Committee and worked with highly placed friends—JD Hugh Cumberland of the Philippines Paul V. McNutt and businessman Dr. President Manuel L. Quezon—to help the mostly German and Austrian refugees get passports and visas, then find employment and homes in Manila.

"We were welcomed to the Philippines at a time when the gates to Jews were closed all over the world," said refugee Lotte Breitbard, 74, of West Hartford, Connecticut.

A fifth brother remained in Ohio and was not involved in the rescue.

The stamp was Hitler's enemy and a rescuer, book by Rabinsky, "Escape to Manila: From Nazi Tyranny to Japanese Terror," led to efforts in the United States and the Philippines to honor the humanitarian effort before the aging refugees die off.

"Our numbers are dwindling, and I didn't want this story to be lost forever," said Rabinsky, 73, of Washington, DC.

Cincinnati rites

On Sunday, Cincinnati's Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education will honor the Fender brothers, Quezon, McNutt and the Filipino people.

At least 20 Jewish refugees and their descendants and nearly 100 members of the Fender family will join relatives of McNutt and Quezon and Philippine Ambassador Alberto Del Rosario in ceremonies at the Cincinnati center.

Descendants about the Fenders had hoped to bring as many as 10,000 refugees to the Philippines, but World War II intervened. They continued working in Manila until the Japanese invasion in 1941.

Rose Fender's daughters, Alice Silverman, now 70 and living in Gaylord, and also remembered her father raising money and spreading hopes paying over lists of desperate refugee applicants in Manila.

"Our children have asked why no one ever told them about this, but we were just kids then," she said. "After we came back to the United States, my father and uncles never talked about it. I think they just thought it was part of their duty and didn't call (out) to us with their lists."

Now the brothers' photos, letters and other possessions, along with those of the refugees, will become part of a permanent exhibit in Cincinnati. Part of the exhibit might be taken to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, and to Manila.

"We want to tell the world about the humanity of these men who did so much to save so many people and were never recognized," said Rozella Pearson, director of the Center for Holocaust and Humanity Education. "We hope it will inspire people within Ohio to become into make a difference."

Proud of his grandpa

Manuel L. Quezon III, a columnist of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, said he was proud of his grandfather's role in the rescue. "In a sense, as president, he was implementing a national policy of the times," he said.

A great nephew of McNutt, who was governor of Indiana in 1939-37, didn't know about his great grandfather's role in the rescue but said he wasn't surprised.

"Paul had the chance to do many different things and always chose public service," said John Bryan, director of the Indiana University Center for Urban Policy and the Environment.

The brothers suffered three Col. Dwight D. Eisenhower, a little more often, but he doubted he due to the Army, becoming commander of Allied forces in Europe and then US president, according to granddaughter Jessie Eisenhower.

The brothers' family is grateful for the long-delayed recognition.

"We are all so proud of them," said Rose Fender's daughter, Jane Ellis, 77. "But we each day would be here to enjoy this."

Chinese mining . . .

From page A1

rebound mineral deposits in the country are located in areas controlled by rebels communist or Moro guerrillas.

Ramos, the guest speaker of the seven Philippine Mining Conference in Makati City, counting executives and Chinese businessmen had a free chuckles when they heard Bond's rhyme.

There were 25 Chinese businessmen representatives of companies and groups—China Chamber of Commerce of Metals, Minerals and Chemicals Importers and Exporters, China Metallurgical Construction Group Corp., MCC International Resources Development Corp., Bechtel Co. Ltd., China Nonferrous Metal Industry's Foreign Engineering and Construction Co. Ltd. and Minmetals Beijing.

The executives, who asked not to be named, said the Chinese businessmen, considered among the most aggressive in the foreign investment in the mining industry, thought that Bond had probably forgotten where most of his group's funds were coming from.

The visitors said China now considers to have its citizens more trained abroad, which is why Filipino communities must China investors differently.

Road show in China

The executives cited the case of a high-way project in Quezon province, a joint venture of PBN guerrillas, which Chinese construction contractors got embroiled for years when it was under a Korean company. But when a Chinese firm took over the project, the province's highways was completed in record time.

Ramos, who visited China in November, said the government has stepped up its investment promotion in the industry, especially in China, which has a large appetite for mineral resources to sustain its fast growth.

A few weeks before the Philippine Mining Conference was held, officials of the government and the Philippine Chamber of Mines conducted a road show in China to invite mining companies to look at investment opportunities in the country.

One of the deals firmed up during the road show was the plan of Benham Rubber Corp. which is keen on taking a major role at the Nonoc Nickel project in Surigao del Norte. The site is said to have rushed and world's reserves worth $5.4 billion.

The rush to invest the mining sector has delayed power talks such the largest River generally power until March and may endanger them, namely, the chief called power shortages.

Ramos said the interested dynasts is the most reliable issue," Malacañang hinted, a leader of the 11,000-member MILF, and as a lobbyist in Mindanao. "It can make or break the peace talks."

Informal negotiations with the government, hosted by Malaysia, and facilitated by Kuala Lumpur, have been a formal deal is signed, is expected to restart in early February.

Iqbal said the MILF had asked for an extension until March to consult local Muslims and indigenous groups of the Supreme Court ruling on foreign ownership of mineral agreements.

"The position of the MILF is very simple. The exploration of natural resources in areas where no people should benefit the Bangsamoro people," he said. "If there's no benefit to the people, we're the first ones if affects the peace talks."

Iqbal said the MILF would put the issue on the table at next month's talks in Kuala Lumpur but had "not made any specific threats that we will sabotage mining operations."

Without the presence of MILF and communist rebels, as well as indigenous groups, the issue of ancestral domain and mining is complicated by some companies and property owners, many of their Defense, opposing the idea of giving up their land.

Flagship projects

The government said last week that it was reporting the initial development of mineral deposit worth $400 billion.

President Macapagal-Arroyo sees the mineral extraction sector as a quick relief to poverty solution for the Philippines, where half the population of 84 million earn the equivalent of $2 a day or less.

Rigoberto Tiglao, head of the Presidential Management Staff, told reporters Friday that the government hoped to develop 23 mining projects with foreign investors.

He put total mining wealth in the country at $840 billion but said most of those investors had gone untapped due to previous environmental and indigenous people issues.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said the country could earn an additional $1 billion yearly if the "23 flagship projects" pushed through.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau said the country's mineral wealth was $1 billion from the industry, awarded by undeclared Filipino companies. Reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora and AFP

Correction

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, The Inquirer story—"$10 ruling on Marcos assets recovery looks"—misstated in some parts of the article the amount of compensation to be set aside for martial law victims in a bill sponsored by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile. The proposed amount is P11 billion—not $11 billion.

Int'l media group raps slay of murder witness

REPORTERS Without Borders has expressed shock at the killing of Edgar Amores, a key witness in the murder of his friend, journalist Edgar Damalerio, and condemned the Philippine government's failure to protect him.

Amores, 46, shot dead in Pagadian City in Mindanao on Feb. 2, was in the Department of Justice's witness protection program. He was the second witness to be killed by accomplices of the alleged chief suspect, ex-police officer Guillermo Wapile.

Amores said his family had lived in fear since May 11, 2000, when Damalerio was killed, and had survived numerous attempts on their lives.

RWB said it was dismayed by the government's inability to protect witnesses in a trial that President Macapagal-Arroyo had vowed as a success in the fight against violence in media persons.

Amores was shot dead at point-blank range by three men as he left a high school in Pagadian where he taught English. He died in a hospital shortly afterward.

Amores was riding in a car with Damalerio when the latter was killed. Amores told RWB several times that he was determined, despite death threats, to give evidence at the trial.

Previously, local police had reportedly covered up for Wapile and released him, despite the fact that he had been identified by two witnesses, Amores and Jury Ladica, who was himself murdered in August 2002.

Reyes warns dirty eateries

INTERIOR Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday directed all local government executives to enforce existing laws on sanitation and food safety.

Reyes issued the order after receiving reports that a number of restaurants were not observing sanitation rules.

He said it was the duty of local government executives under the Local Government Code to see to it that such laws were implemented.

He reminded the local chief executives that it was within their power to regulate the operation of restaurants, barbeques, hotels and other similar establishments in their areas of jurisdiction.

The law does not only cover food preparation, handling, storage and delivery but also the need for these establishments to provide clean facilities like toilets for their customers, he said.

He said establishments found in violation of sanitation laws would be closed down and their sanitary permits and health certificates revoked.

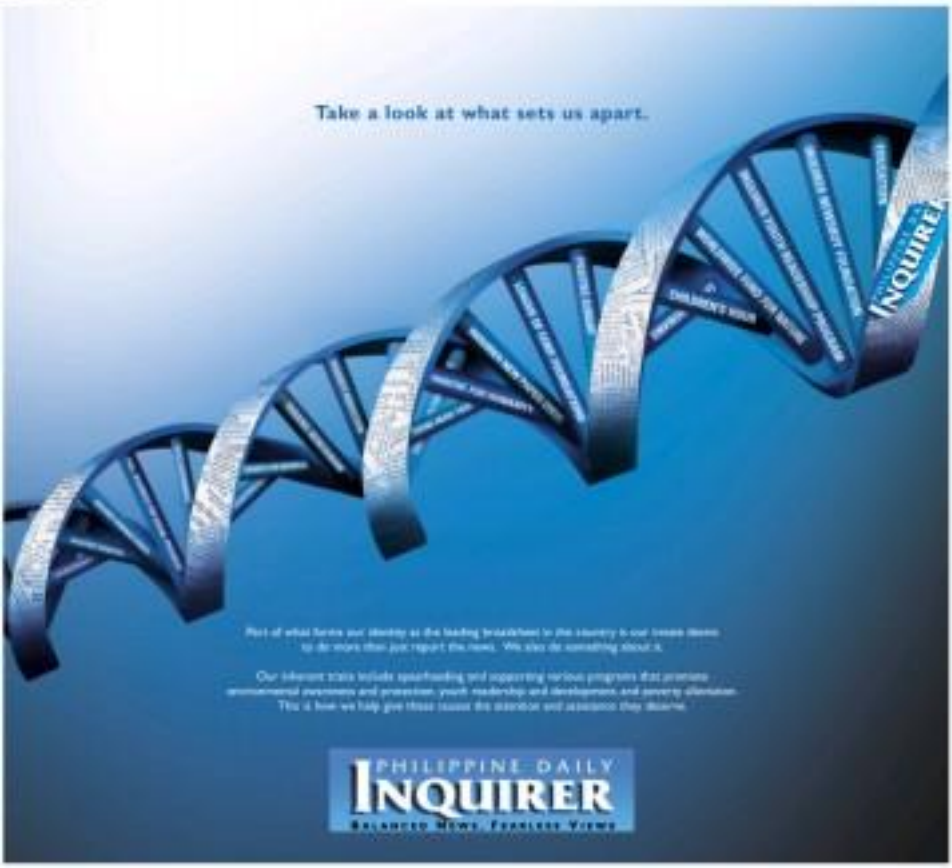
Nelson S. Flavia

O. Isaac, 73

GEN. HERALDO B. Isaac (ret.), a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 1950, died after suffering heart failure on Feb. 7. He was 73.

His body lies at the Xiloy-negre Village Chapel in Antipolo City.

He is survived by his wife Teresita; children Gerry and Chi, Greg, Willy and Ting, Sylvia and Greg, Paul and Bessie, Agnes, and Tina; grandchildren Nikki, Yuri and Ivo. Interment will be announced later.



Year of Rooster not for get-rich schemes

From page A1

optimism is carried over to the Year of the Rooster, but definitely, it is not the year for get-rich schemes. If all goes, one must try to resist the panic inspiration to try wild get-rich schemes.

Noynoy will be different to handline policies and governments will flee branches in such cities. But, there is nothing to worry about because it's just for show. Wood will resurface on the usually very colorful casino but it will still remain operational.

There will be lots of arguments on all fronts—in business, in romance and even in the home. But these arguments will create no permanent damage to anyone. Confusion will be the order of the day but the rooster rests at night.

Because efficiency is the keyword of the Year of the Rooster, nobody will really go hungry. It is, however, suggested that people should keep their eyes open and their breaths closed. It is a year when money can be found but products won't be empty.

• For the Rat—Celebrations are in order for the Rat. There will be new partnerships or mid-wages to the family. Good things will happen overnight. Due to many commitments, the rat must guard against overreach which could be detrimental to health.

• For the Ox—It will be a moderately happy year for the ox, which will enjoy success even in something unlikely or strange as a experienced. Even so, it must be careful about being too trusting.

• For the Tiger—There will be consistency in the economics. But seemingly large problems will be solved. Help will likely come from unexpected places or unsolicited tools.

• For the Rabbit—It will be a time for the rabbit to merge with others for support and comfort, taking a more conservative stand in making important decisions. Although most frustrating of money problems will ultimately be solved.

• For the Dragon—It will be a happy and rewarded year for the dragon. There will be good news, promotions, and the return of money given up the last. Family life will be smooth, home renewed and new influential friends made.

• For the Snake—It will be a year of inspiration, year. The achievements of the snake can be fantastic. Recognition or promotion is forthcoming. Business and joint ventures can be approved. The snake must resist jealousy.

• For the Horse—It will a fantastic good year. There will be good tidings at least for slight disturbances in career or profession. Problems will be solved but the horse may have to sacrifice enjoyment and spleen to win easily.

• For the Sheep—It's time for the sheep to bring great opportunities and get paycheck. Many celebrations will come that will prove to be the happiest events of the year.

• For the Monkey—The monkey will have extra money and right contacts to push plans through. But it must be careful not to overextend with forced relationship and commitments.

• For the Rooster—It's time for a splendid comeback. Problems will be solved with relative ease with ideas finding the support of influential and powerful people. Even in disputes, the rooster will emerge judge.

• For the Dog—The dog could be faced with challenges to establish. Attention must be focused on health and relationships. Divorce will have to be counted to get money due to dog.

• For the Pig—It will be another busy year for the pig. All the right developments in your will be made. Investments will could prove to be less stable. It is a year of spending more time overcoming obstructions. Patience must be practiced in negotiations could get wrong hands.

The additional singles, one can combine the Metrics equivalent of the Eastern sign as indicated in the chart.

Please discover that the Dragon is the equivalent of the Western sign of mine and the snake is the equivalent of the Western sign of Taurus. Thus, if you were born in the Year of the Dragon and you are Taurus you can read the indications for both the Dragon and the Snake. For example, President Macapagal-Arroyo was born in the Year of the Pig, but being born on April 5, as Aries sign, the equivalent of which is a Dragon in the Eastern zodiac, she could, therefore, read both the Pig and the Dragon to find out whether to run for her in the Year of the Rooster.

(EDITOR'S Note: George Siosa is the author of the best selling book, "4 Minute Astrole You," TV host of "4MB Your Fortune is the Game of Life," founder of the Temple of Prayer, Peace and Prosperity. He is also a multi-talented songwriter, poet, entrepreneur and astrologer. See also related stories in Astrea the Station, Page A30.)

MESTRO	LESTRO								
Ares	Dragon	1940	1928	1916	1952	1964	1976	1988	2000	2012
Taurus	Snake	1941	1929	1917	1953	1965	1977	1989	2001	2013
Gemini	Horse	1942	1930	1918	1954	1966	1978	1990	2002	
Cancer	Sheep	1943	1931	1919	1955	1967	1979	1991	2003	
Leo	Monkey	1944	1932	1920	1956	1968	1980	1992	2004	
Virgo	Rooster	1945	1933	1921	1957	1969	1981	1993	2005	
Libra	Dog	1946	1934	1922	1958	1970	1982	1994	2006	
Scorpio	Pig	1947	1935	1923	1959	1971	1983	1995	2007	
Sagittarius	Rat	1948	1936	1924	1960	1972	1984	1996	2008	
Capricorn	Ox	1949	1937	1925	1961	1973	1985	1997	2009	
Aquarius	Tiger	1950	1938	1926	1962	1974	1986	1998	2010	
Pisces	Rabbit	1951	1939	1927	1963	1975	1987	1999	2011	

Lakas, Kampi row heats up

By Carlito Pablo

THE SIMMERING rivalry between administration partner Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats and Speaker Sen. Francisco Pangilinan Kampi has come to a boil again.

Neophyte Kap Gerardo Espina Jr. (Bikol) yesterday lashed Lakas and took his oath to a new Kampi member before the Kampi general, Rep. Rodolfo Plaza (Agusan).

But Espina's defection did not increase the number of Kampi members, which has remained at 36, because someone else bolted the party.

Kampi has lost Rep. Josef Jacinto Arnan (Bistro Bata), who joined the Lakas camp, according to Plaza.

Plaza himself has emerged from the incumbent's effort keeping out of the public limelight since the last few months of 2004.

He said in the Kampi big guns yesterday called a press conference to announce the party's strong position in the race for the House of Representatives to revive the issue of Charter change through a constituent assembly.

Charter change, particularly the shift to a parliamentary and federal system, of government, is identified with Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., Lakas president, and his allies.

Opposition still settling Ping, Edong conflict

From page A1

took him by surprise because there was no indication of any of this when they last talked to each other two months ago.

He noted that he was one of the last Cabinet members who stood by Arroyo during the height of the Hello Garci controversy in 2005. "That's why I could only explain that some of his advisers are not advising him well," he said.

For his part, Lacson said he was "pleasantly surprised" by many to decide to run for the senatorial race. He said he decided not to consult him anymore to ease out tension.

"This is not a choice between Angara and Lacson but a choice between no opposition running in senate and Angara," Lacson said at a press conference.

"This is an issue involving trust, good will, and good faith," he said.

Asked what his position would be on this, he said there was no need for the opposition to consult him because "they know exactly where my sentiments lie."

Lacson said the endorsement of Angara would help the opposition unify. "We can now be by removing the division at least against one person," he said, noting this was his personal view.

Angara not LDP

Reading the statements of the former President in the Inquirer report on Monday, Lacson said Ridsdel was excluding Angara and not the LDP.

"Angara is not LDP and LDP is not Angara," he said.

He said Angara's son, lawyer Rep. Sonny Angara, and his sister, Aurora Gov. Bellaflor Angara, were "more welcome to remain in the opposition." Both are members of the LDP.

Asked why Angara was the one being courted and not him, Lacson said: "Maybe I'm considered a more genuine opposition [member than Chito Angara]."

He noted that Angara had not been coming with the minority, saying Angara's positions on the valued-added tax and the approved pension act on alcohol and tobacco products.

Moderate

Angara said his would meet with his own party mates in the LDP to determine their direction.

"Because I sensed from my colleagues in LDP that they want us to be in the middle, moderate, independent of any entanglement of any alignment so that we could choose projects that we would support," he said.

Angara said he recalled that the kind of opposition was what Pres. she opposition's standard. because in the last presidential election, had resulted in

The senator acknowledged that the national executive committee of the LDP or the executive would decide whether he would run with the nine-member (currently in the Senate).

"I would likely stay [with the minority] but we'll be acting independently," he told reporters.

He reiterated that Lacson was the senator the opposition has the presidential decision last year.

Angara pointed out that Lacson is the administration's candidate for senior of Senate.

"So aside from background, how could I [say that] I have group. There is no unity," he said.

"The point is simple. We will decide which group are still loyal to unity with and which position we will take," he said.

Kampi leader Sen. Loren Legarda is hoping opposition leaders can thresh out their differences and abandon plans to expel Angara from their ranks.

"I hope it's doable a transaction," she told reporters in Malacañan, said Legarda, running mate of Poe in last year's presidential election.

Legarda, however, said she had to satisfy from Ridsdel himself if he had indeed made statements against the opposition senatorial candidates.

Reports Jerry Esplanada, Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

Mountaineer dies in trek on Makiling

From page A1

gaping wound in his back.

Visited his hotel and penned a whole roll of those papers on his back to stop the bleeding. But his condition deteriorated fast," he said. "He could not hold his head that the wounds on his head led as to the slope."

After minutes later, Pimentel was dead.

Tomines said he had heard of stories about Makiling being home to many supernatural beings and strange encounters, but he never paid attention to them. He and Pimentel had, in fact, gone trekking there a few months ago.

Preparation

The three mountaineers, together with Pimentel Bonnie, 40, climbed the 3,641-foot Mahipon Peak in the Arayat Range in Mexico, Pampanga, last Saturday at around 3 p.m. They followed an established trail.

Tomines said the trek was in preparation for their "major climb" of Mt. Apo, Mt. Pulag in Benguet or Mt. Pinatubo in Pampanga.

At around 7 p.m., they found a campsite under a balete tree and decided to smoke the mountain monster out by the next day.

Tomines said they planned to descend using the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Forestry College hill on the mountain's eastern side. It was the first time that all four experienced mountain climbers who belonged to the Philippine Heart Center Mountaineering Club (PHCEC) would use that trail.

"Don't friend give us instructions but on several side to follow them. We lost our trail and wandered while trying to look for it. We had been trekking for hours, at around 7 p.m. are forced to be children," Tomines said.

Help!

Rosero, who worked as a guide in Sagada, got separated from the group on their way down from the summit and eventually found a trail that led him out of the mountain.

Accompanied by residents of Barangay Mibing, an upland community in Makiling, he went to the house of Los Baños Mayor Cesario Ruivivar Jr. to ask for help.

Ruivivar informed Rosero that the municipal action center received a phone call from emergency hotline 911 117, informing them that a group of mountaineers was lost on Mt. Makiling.

Luckily, Tomines said, their mobile phones were still charged and had signals. They had called 117 as well as Tomines' brother, a member of the Mount Silvanatum Search & Rescue Team of the Philippines (see help).

Rosero sent text messages to his friends, one of whom alerted the Philippine Air Force (PAF). Elfrin Search and Rescue Group is around 8:30 p.m. on Sunday.

But the Mt. Rosero ruled out a night rescue because of the dangers it imposed.

Tomines, who suffered cuts and bruises all over his body, lamented that it took authorities from Los Baños to Cavinti to get to the mountain.

Pimentel, at around 2 a.m. yesterday, members of Mount Banal Tomines and Pimentel's lifeless body in a sleeping system.

Unknown trail

Chief Insp. Raul Tacaca, Mt. Tomas police chief, said Pimentel died from internal head injuries that he suffered after falling into a five-meter ravine at Sitio Pahinggian, Barangay Bambobanan, Mt. Tomas.

He said the victim could have tumbled down.

Los Baños tourism officer Rolito Corpuz said the Los Baños area trail is unfamiliar to many mountaineers and is seldom used.

Rescue police and paramedics reached the site early yesterday morning and were told that Pimentel died from internal bleeding. Tacaca said the mountaineers and rescuers bringing down Pimentel's body and Air Force spokesperson Lt. Col. Remy Padilla.

Pimentel's sister, Gemma, and nephew, Sandy, were brought by the Air Force to Los Baños before they proceeded to Pimentel's residence.

After bringing guns lied and to Tomines and Rosero, the Air Force notified the mayor, and Pimentel's body placed in a green body bag, back to Villaluz the Base at Manila at 10:20 a.m. yesterday.

Prevention

Tomines, who had been climbing with Pimentel for only a few months, said mountain climbing was the doctor's "passion."

Pimentel had been an accountant for 10 years, he said.

"I would not help but think that he had many precautions so can what happened. When we got lost, he kept on saying that we would be in the newspapers the next day, and that he trekking days were over. He also spoke to some of his friends about his first time, he had a friend save pair of hiking shoes and a new shirt. I even teased him about it," Tomines said, shaking his head. With a report from Alexis Pepa

Ash maker finds deeper ...

Manny would be standing by the church entrance, quietly observing parishioners lining up to get their foreheads dabbed with ash.

"It makes me happy to see people going through a ritual where I also played a part," he said in an interview on Septic Ash Wednesday ritual to did not cause him ashes and we will return to ashes."

According to the Ministry of Liturgical Affairs of the Archdiocese of Manila, Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the 40-day season of Lent, a period of fasting and abstinence and spiritual discipline. In the Philippines, it is considered the holiest of the liturgical seasons, ending in Holy Week.

On this day, ashes are blessed and imposed on Catholics, usually during or after Holy Mass. It is also a day of universal fast and abstinence.

Manny Manny knows this only too well, and so two days before Ash Wednesday he collects dried palaspas (palm leaves) blessed on the previous Palm Sunday, puts them in a drum and burns them to the church courtyard during a private ritual ritual.

The ritual is a sort of thanksgiving, he said, for all the blessings he has received since he left his home province of Abra some 56 years ago. He would not have survived in Manila had it not been for divine intervention, he said.

In recent years, he said, the collection of dried palaspas has decreased, a sign that people were losing their faith or they're not buying palm leaves anymore.

But there's ample stock of stock older palaspas in the church's warehouse so Manny doesn't worry.

God's blessing

Before burning the heap of dry palms, Manny prays the "Apostles' Creed," "Hail Mary" and "Glory Be." God's blessing is very important even in something as simple as his job.

In Iglesia a match, drops it into the drum, and waits until the fire crackles.

"I don't see gas because it would give the ashes a nauseating smell," he said in Filipino. "Besides, dry palm leaves are easy to ignite."

Manny Manny allows the ashes to cool which usually takes nine minutes. Then he filters the heap until only fine ash is left.

"I wouldn't want anyone's forehead accidentally scratched," he said.

Manny Manny also noticed that fewer people remembered Ash Wednesday.

And those who remember don't seem to understand what it's all about, he said.

Runaway

For Manny Manny, Ash Wednesday will never lose its meaning.

"It takes humility for people to acknowledge where they came from and where they will end up," he said.

When Manny was two, his father, a guerrilla who fought the Japanese, disappeared and was later branded.

When his mother remarried in 1935, he ran away from home. He was 13.

He would not accept his mother's decision to take another husband and never wrote her until he was about to marry some 20 years later.

Hard life

In Manila, Manny Manny started as a shoe-shine boy and a kind couple from Tondo took him in and treated him as family.

When the couple left for the U.S., their left their store to him. Manny became an illegal tenant in Manny, his wife and three children.

In 1966, he found a job as a bus driver at the University of Santo Tomas. Twenty years later, he moved to the Intramuros Bureau parish chapel, where he still works as an all-around employee, driver and "ash maker."

Many Manny said he was not always down, although time has been his bad EW lenses.

"If you disclose everything to God," he said, "you will never get tired."

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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

Iran to speed up nuke bid if attacked

TEHRAN—Iran would both retaliate and accelerate its drive to master nuclear technology if the United States or Israel attacked its uranium facilities, Iran's chief nuclear negotiator warned on Sunday.

Hassan Rohani, secretary-general of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, also said there was nothing the West could offer Tehran that would persuade it to scrap a nuclear program which Washington fears may be used to make bombs.

Asked about a possible attack by the United States or Israel, which have both said a nuclear-armed Iran would be unacceptable, Rohani said: "If such an attack happens [Iran's atomic facilities] takes place then of course we will retaliate and we will definitely accelerate our activities to complete our [nuclear] fuel cycle."

Speaking in a rare interview, Rohani said Iran's ability to produce its own nuclear fuels had made it "invulnerable" to attack since it could simply rebuild whatever was destroyed.

"But I do not think the United States itself will take such a risk... They know our capabilities for retaliating against such attacks," the soft-spoken cleric added.

Iran has ballistic missiles which can hit Israel and US bases in the Gulf and has vowed to retaliate strongly should either country try to topple Iran's 1981 successful Islamic Revolution.

Iran says its nuclear program will be used to generate electricity, not make bombs. Washington says Tehran is using a civilian nuclear program as a front for weapons development.

US President George W. Bush has refused to rule out military strikes against Iran to prevent it from developing nuclear weapons. But Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Friday a US attack was "not on the agenda."

US Vice President Dick Cheney last month warned Israel could in the future try to attack Iran's nuclear facilities.

Israel...believed to be the Middle East's only nuclear armed state...has not said it will attack.

The European Union, led by Britain, Germany and France, is trying to persuade Iran to turn a temporary freeze on enrichment into a permanent suspension in return for economic and political incentives.

But Rohani said even the renewal of US sanctions on Iran or severing diplomatic ties with Washington would not be enough to tempt Tehran to give up its nuclear drive.

Reuters

Post-poll violence in Iraq: Suicide bombers kill 26

BAGHDAD—Suicide bombers killed at least 26 people in attacks in two Iraqi cities on Monday, police said, in the worst bloodshed since the country's watershed elections.

At least 14 people were killed and 113 were wounded when a suicide car bomb exploded outside a police station in the town of Baquba, northeast of Baghdad.

Another 12 died and 50 were wounded in a blast at a hospital in the northern city of Mosul. Police said a man rushed in a suicide jacket although hospital officials initially said it was the result of a mortar attack.

Rabia Hazem, director general for health in Mosul, said police had been gathering at the rear of the hospital to retrieve their salaries when the blast tore through the crowd.

A large crater was likewise in the road and at least five cars were destroyed. Most, if not all, of the victims were thought to be police officers.

Guerrillas trying to overthrow Iraq's US-backed government have mounted frequent suicide and car bomb security forces, but failed to cheer Iraqis as they did on January 30 despite a string of mid-week suicide bombings in polling centers.

Since then there have been dozens on attacks, but few as deadly as Monday's. Reuters

COOL RUNNING
A native Chilean participates in a traditional competition named Raka Pui in which men slide on plankish trucks from Muenga Pui hill at an inclination of 55 degrees, reaching an 80-ton-per-hour speed, during the traditional Tapati festival of the Rapanui folklore, in Easter Island, Chile, Feb. 6. —AP

Britain plans crackdown on illegals

LONDON—The British government will propose an Australian-style points system for migrant workers, seeking to regain the upper hand on an issue that could prove its Achilles heel in an expected May election.

Tony Blair is on track for victory but a poll on Sunday showed record ends by the opposition Conservative Party on what it calls a shambolic asylum and immigration system, has left a deep rift with the public.

Hitting back, the Labour government will unveil plans on Monday for a points scheme for migrants to screen out unskilled workers and will announce fresh efforts to deport bogus asylum seekers.

"Controlled migration is beneficial as Britain," Blair wrote in an article for Monday's Times newspaper. "However populist it may be, diverting it down would be clearly irresponsible and very quickly deeply damaging to our economy."

Blair said Britain needed to clamp down on those who abuse the system, such as students who apply for non-existent courses.

"We need as well to stop manifestly unfounded claims—dependents spuriously dependents, or parent or pseudo-fiancé marriages, to have the power to demand special requirements if applications from particular countries significantly to get admitted, especially where the risk is to people."

Immigration and asylum will be key election battlegrounds.

While most analysts rule out a Conservative election win, success on the issue could help them overturn Blair's huge parliamentary majority. Reuters

NCE

Rice holds talks with Abbas, offers US help

RAMALLAH, West Bank—US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice held talks with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Monday, pledging Washington's support for his efforts to end anti-Israeli extremism and lawlessness.

"The Palestinian leadership will have to make some difficult choices to do some hard things concerning security, but they will find very good partners in the international community and the United States will be foremost among them," Rice told Abbas. Shaalo television before crossing into Ramallah in the West Bank.

Driving her visit is the Middle East aims—taking up her post last month, Rice proposed to Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Sunday a "sweeping agenda" that she outlined would involve the United States monitoring a smaller ground.

Israel said the Palestinians hope to announce a formal end to more than four years of bloodshed at a summit in Egypt on Tuesday.

The meeting in the Red Sea resort of Sharm el-Sheikh will mark a dramatic return to efforts to get a US-backed peace "road map" back on track. The plan charts mutual steps towards establishment of a Palestinian state alongside a secure Israel.

Rice wants to help Abbas build democratic institutions from Ramallah, where predecessor Yasser Arafat is buried in the Israeli-battered compound in which he was confined until his release to his death in November.

Entering the Muqata compound, Rice's motorcade swept past Arafat's tomb without stopping.

The United States distanced Arafat as an obstacle to peace but Rice's visit showed the Bush administration was eager to bolster Abbas with concrete measures to support his efforts to rein in violence since his election last month.

"That will include financial support. It will include political support. It will include training and security. It will include other such other parties to get them to be active," she said at the television interview. Reuters

Arafat's tomb without stopping.

Saudi charity complicates tsunami relief work

By Brian Murphy and Mike Corey

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—A powerful Saudi charity under scrutiny for alleged terrorist ties is expanding operations in tsunami-ravaged areas of Indonesia, importing a hardline religious message that the West fears could spread extremist islam in the world's most populous Muslim nation.

The presence of the International Islamic Relief Organization, a major Saudi-based relief charity in Indonesia, which is desperate for help but also under pressure to combat Islamic militants after suffering attacks blamed on militants in the past three years that killed more than 200 people.

It also offers a high-profile test of Saudi promises to closely monitor its foreign aid activities. Many have feared probes as possible back channels for Islamic terrorist groups and vanguards for the kingdom's severe interpretation of Islamic laws called Wahhabism.

The Islamic Relief charity is a central target in a US Treasury Department investigation of terror wrapping up Tuesday in the Saudi capital, Riyadh. Delegates from more than 50 nations are expected, including the United States, Iran, many Arab nations and Indonesia.

The International Islamic Relief Organization—one of Saudi Arabia's biggest benevolent groups—has been cleared of any possible terror links by Saudi auditors. But experts who study terrorist financing still raise questions about the group and its parent body, the Muslim World League, which is considered a key source for Saudi-based funding and propaganda Wahhabist Islam around the globe.

"It's a concern when extremist ideologies gain a foothold in places like Indonesia," Juan Zarate, the assistant secretary for terrorist financing at the US treasury department, said. "There is always the potential for the use of computer disruptive to justify and support terrorist activities."

Many scholars consider Wahhabism basically part of the bedrock for Islamic extremists and a guiding force for the Saudi hosts al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. The Dec. 26 tsunami unleashed offer Saudi royal rulers an opportunity to gain ground in Indonesia, where more moderate ideas of faith have dominated.

"There's a religious imperative that means Islamic relief with the aid," said Simon Hess, a researcher specializing in Sufi at Inter at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. "Anything they put forward that says, 'We are concerned about widows and orphans and that sort of thing,' about 'we are underwood in the bigger scheme. The [2003] is an instrument of Saudi foreign policy."

Suspected benefactors of IIRO funds in the past—according to testimony from terrorism analysts before US Senate subcommittees—include the Palestinian Islamic Hamas, which has carried out most suicide bombings in Israel, and al-Qaida sympathizers in Kashmir, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

The International Crisis Group, a global affairs watchdog, described the IIRO as mostly a "genuine charity" in a 2003 report. But, it argued, the Saudi group has a questionable past in the region, including allegedly serving as "a cover" for al-Qaida operations in the Philippines, where it was once headed by Bin Laden's brother-in-law, Mohammed Jamal Khalifa.

Victor Comras, a former member of a UN team monitoring al-Qaida, also said that investigators are still studying possible IIRO connections to the Southeast Asian terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah. Akkused for the Bali nightclub blasts in 2002 that killed 202 people and the bombing of the UN headquarters in Jakarta in 2003 that killed 12 people.

Comras urged careful oversight to ensure tsunami aid doesn't drift into radical hands.

"I'm sure their motivations are to help," he said of the IIRO relief work in Indonesia. "But their fundamental purpose is to spread the doctrines of Islam and one of the unintended consequences is the greater hand spread of terrorism."

An envoy for the IIRO rejected such criticism. He described the Saudi work in the tsunami zone as purely humanitarian, providing food, serving for orphans and scheduling mosques—deserving parallels with other faith-based aid groups such as Christian groups.

The group said there were no plans to bring in Islamic envoys from Saudi Arabia, but didn't rule out offering religious assistance in the future.

"At this time, they need relief not religion," said Al Hadri said as he welcomed the arrival of a top delegation from the Saudi Red Crescent Society to Banda Aceh, a hub for international aid groups. "In the future, if they need religious-related help) we will provide it."

Al Hadri also insisted terrorism was displaced by the IIRO, which has been active in Indonesia since 1991 and spends about $1 million every?? 1,000 a year.

"[Critics] always accuse us of being a terrorist organization. But there is no evidence of this," Al Hadri said. "They will not find anything. We've never given money for anything but orphanages and for mosques."

At least six other Saudi-based charity, the World Assembly of Muslim Youth, is active in Indonesia's devastated Aceh province. The group has been accused by Israel of alleged ties to Jemaah Islam ya Hamas. A Sen. Charles Schumer (New York Democrat) has called for a similar probe of the assembly's US branch, which was once run by Bin Laden's nephew Al-Khalifa. The group denies any support for terrorist groups. AP

FORMER Miss World and Indian queen of Bollywood, Aishwarya Rai, performs at the "Help Tsunami Survivors" to aid of tsunami victims in Bombay, early Feb. 7. —AP

Thai PM Thaksin creates history, raises concerns

By Ed Cropley

BANGKOK—Billionaire Thaksin Shinawatra swept to power in Thailand's January 6 general election with a landslide victory that has given him unprecedented authority.

But in a second historic election landslide hands one of Thailand's richest men an unprecedented grip on power, the term being heralded about town as "dictator."

Thaksin, a self-styled "CEO premier" for whom strong government is effective government, swept the polls as undisputed.

"Where in the world is a single-party government called a dictatorship?" Thaksin, a strong critic of whom people have dash in one?" he told reporters at a mass rally to rescind Yingluck at the climax of his 2005 campaign.

Now, like ex-Gaulle 50s, no one can avoid the fact that Thaksin, the only elected prime minister in Thailand's coup-prone history to finish a full four-year term, is here to stay.

Even his harshest critics concede that 55-year-old has managed to make good on many of the popular platform of his health-care and handouts for the rural masses that swept him to power in 2001.

With an uncanny ability to milk successes and elude use of memes, so endless it becoming ironic that has shaken off the ravages of AIDS, bird flu, violence in the Muslim south and the Dec. 26 tsunami, his popularity has barely dipped below the stratosphere.

Even into a family of ethnic Chinese silk merchants in 1949 in the northern city of Chiang Mai, Thaksin became a politician in 1973 before winning a state scholarship to study for a masters degree in criminal justice at Eastern Kentucky University.

He earned a doctorate in the same subject from Sam Houston State University in Texas five years later and then bought at the Thai Police Cadet Academy, a career that many say explains his tough stance on law and order.

However, he quit the force in 1987 to go into business, establishing a small computer dealership with his wife Pojaman that started selling hardware to the Thai police force.

The company evolved into present day Shin Corp, a telecoms conglomerate now worth $2.6 billion on the Thai stock market, with interests ranging from mobile phones to satellites, the internet and the media.

Profits beyond his dreams...Forbes magazine estimates his family fortune at $1.4 billion—Thaksin resigned from every position in his telecoms empire before becoming foreign minister in 1994. Reuters

THAKSIN

ENTERTAINMENT Metro

RAJI, UMMATTI, Virginia Madsen, Sandra Oh and Thomas Haden Church, Outstanding Performances by a Cast in a Motion Picture for "Sideways"

JAMIE FOXX: Pitch-perfect performance.

HILARY SWANK: Million-dollar feeling

'Sideways' knocks out 'Million Dollar Baby'

A who's who of American acting packs the Shrine auditorium in LA as US Screen Actors Guild toasts peers in important pre-Oscar test

LOS ANGELES—Modest wine country comedy "Sideways" staged a surprise knockout over favorites "Million Dollar Baby" and "The Aviator" by winning the top prize for Best Ensemble Acting at the Screen Actors Guild awards on Saturday, an important pre-Oscar test.

Hilary Swank won the best actress award for her performance as a gritty boxer in Clint Eastwood's "Million Dollar Baby" and Jamie Foxx was named Best Actor for his pitch-perfect performance as soul singer Ray Charles in "Ray."

Veteran actor Morgan Freeman took the Best Supporting Actor award for playing a gym manager and mutton-can fighter in "Million Dollar Baby" and Cate Blanchett won Best Supporting Actress for playing Katharine Hepburn in "The Aviator."

The SAG awards are a major test on the road to the Oscars because actors are the largest single group voting for the Academy Awards. Klapisch said "The Aviator" or "Million Dollar Baby" would have had front-runner's status for the Best Picture Oscar, Hollywood's highest award, if either had won.

But the same might not be able to be said of "Sideways," a modest comedy that has garnered several certain awards but is not the kind of showy film that wins the Oscar. The film was released by Fox Searchlight Pictures.

But for many actors, it seemed a perfect movie giving actor to a lifetime rules to educate-recognized performers.

On stage, "Sideways" actress Sandra Oh thanked her husband, director Alexander Payne, who she said "saw in each one of us some thing you don't see. Thank you for giving me a shot."

Backstage, co-star Virginia Madsen was asked what the film did for her and said "It got me employed. I am so grateful."

(SEE PAGE A-2)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Tuesday, February 8, 2005

WEDNESDAY and THURSDAY / 10 pm after Big News

American Idol

ABC

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TANONG NG BAYAN

YEAR OF THE ROOSTER: BUENAS BA SA 'PINAS?

INQ INQ TV TV

MARCIA Cross, hardly desperate-looking

JAMES Denton, "Desperate Housewives"

MORGAN FREEMAN: "I want to thank everyone. I have never met..."

'Sideways' knocks out 'Million Dollar Baby'

CATE Blanchett and Leonardo DiCaprio on presenters

JOHNNY Depp and wife Vanessa Paredis in a rare public appearance together

From page A1

Who's who list

Swank won Best Actress for her performance as the scrappy boxer in a drama that so far has succeeded in keeping its surprise ending mostly secret.

At the Oscars, Swank will likely see stiff competition from Annette Bening, who plays an aging stage diva in "Being Julia," in a role matched Oscar race for 1999 Elaine Stritch's cameo Bening" and "Boys Don't Cry."

Bening won the SAG award last year playing a housewife whose marriage is on the rocks in "American Beauty," but lost the Oscar to Swank as a troubled, trans-gender teen in "Boys Don't Cry."

A white's artful of American acting packed the Shrine auditorium in Los Angeles for an hour-long program that has established itself as a major stopover on the road to the Feb. 27 Oscars.

The only person considered a shoo-in for an award was Sims, a heavy favorite from the start. Asked backstage if he may be packing his carry with the Ray Charles role, Sims said no. "I think this is actually the beginning and not the end," Australian-born Blanchett declared herself totally surprised, saying that had she known she would win, "I wouldn't have worn such a tight dress." She added that the dress made it difficult to walk to the stage.

Freeman joked onstage: "I want to thank everyone I have ever known." Then, on a more serious note, added, "I want to thank Hilary Swank and my family. I want to thank Hilary Swank and ... and I want to thank you all so much."

Television awards

Australian Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush was Best Actor in a Miniseries or TV Movie for his portrayal of roadhouse comedian Peter Sellers in "The Life and Death of Peter Sellers."

Glenn Close won Best Actress in a TV movie or miniseries playing Eleanor of Aquitaine in "The Lion in Winter."

Tony Shalhoub won the award for Best Male Comic Actor in a TV series for his performance as an obsessive-compulsive detective in "Monk."

ABC's hit "Desperate Housewives" was named Best Ensemble TV Comedy Series, and Teri Hatcher won Best Actress in a TV Comedy Series for her performance on that show.

GLENN Close for "The Lion in Winter"

FABULOUS Charlize Theron

"CSI: CRIME Scene Investigation was for Outstanding Performance by an Ensemble Cast in a TV Drama Series. (From left) George Eads, Marg Helgenberger, Eric Szmanda, William Petersen, Jorja Fox, Paul Guilfoyle and Robert David Hall

DOUG Savant speaks for "Desperate Housewives" cast (from left) Jesse Metcalfe, Eva Longoria, Felicity Huffman, Steven Culp, Brenda Strong, Mirabelle Sheridan, Teri Hatcher.

HERM SUVARI, Sam Morales and Kara Wilcox

MELISSA GILBERT, SAG president

FELICITY Huffman arrives peace-fully.

In an emotional moment, Elaine Grbach (ask) the stage in a standing ovation to accept the award for Best Actor in a Dramatic Series for her late husband, Jerry Orbach, who was the county homicide detective Lenny Briscoe on television's "Law & Order."

She talked about his love of acting on stage and screen, mentioning his roles in Broadway hits like "Chicago" and "Guys and Dolls" and offered his motto: "Never leave a role alone."

Jennifer Garner was named Best Actress in a TV Drama in series for her work as the super agent in "Alias," and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" was named best TV drama. Reuters

LAURA Linney, nominee

JENNIFER Garner "Alias" Best Actress in a Television Drama

James Garner, Lifetime Achievement: I must have done something good

LOS ANGELES—James Garner saw his career of more than 50 years in movies and television flash before his eyes last night when he received the Screen Actors Guild's Lifetime Achievement award.

Garner, who remains a working actor at 76, plays the grandfather on the ABC sitcom "8 Simple Rules" and was SAG-nominated yesterday for his role in the movie "The Notebook."

He lost the Best Supporting Actor award to Morgan Freeman of "Million Dollar Baby" who saluted Garner with a verse from the Declaration of Garner's old TV show "Maverick."

Garner got his start in show business when a scout's swim near scout found the Norman, Oklahoma, native at Hollywood High. He was 16 and known by his real name, Bumper Baker.

"I'm not at all sure how I got here," he said. "This wonderful award for me think. Hey, Jim, you must have done something good."

After earning a Purple Heart in the Korean War, Garner landed a small part on Broadway in "The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial." That led to a contract with Warner Bros., where he was cast in his first television and movie roles.

He is best known for playing wry detective Jim Rockford on the 1974-80 series "The Rockford Files." He kept the character going in seven TV movies.

After starring Marlon Brando's friend in the movie "Sayonara," Garner became a TV star in "Maverick," the popular Western series on which he portrayed a riverboat gambler who was never afraid to use fists a fight. Years later he starred in the movie version with Mel Gibson.

Garner accepted his award from Gibson and another former co-star, Julie Andrews, who proclaimed him "the dishiest fellow you've ever met."

"I lost my screen virginity to this in 'The Americanization of Emily' and I lose me murdered in him in 'Victor/Victoria,'" Andrews said.

Greeted by a standing ovation, Garner urged the audience, "Don't do too much of this. I get emotional."

He joked, "I don't know if I deserve this award, but please, for tonight, you'll forgive me if I act like I do."

Garner is a former vice president and board member of the actors union. AP

HE GETS emotional, he says. But now he's not happy.

RIO CARNIVAL
A performer from the Unidos da Tijuca samba school dances in Rio de Janeiro's premier Carnival parade Feb. 7. Rio de Janeiro erupted as the beat of drums on Sunday night as dancers from the city's samba schools showed off their skills in what promised to be the most expensive carnival yet. AFP

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Spain gov't offers amnesty to 800,000 illegal migrants

MADRID—Spain's Socialist government offers an amnesty to hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants from Morocco despite concerns it could make Spain an even more attractive destination for migrants.

Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero's government says the amnesty will allow it to manage migration. However, its announcement have done nothing to quell the controversy.

Spain is the main gateway to Europe for illegal immigrants.

An estimated 800,000 migrants live in the streets illegally but there is no way to know how many will benefit from the amnesty.

The scale of the problem was underlined on Saturday when Spanish authorities rescued 227 African would-be migrants from a decrepit fishing boat drifting off the Canary Islands.

Jose Manuel Soria, head of the local authority in the island of Gran Canaria, wrote in the conservative ABC newspaper on Sunday that the incident showed the alarming power of the amnesty effect—even though new arrivals cannot qualify.

"The irresistible attraction more of papers for everyone wanders the rich and the impunity of the clandestine expeditions," said Soria, a member of the opposition Popular Party which has roundly criticized the amnesty.

El Mundo newspaper said in an opinion piece that it was an intolerable fact Spain was facing an influx of immigrants from Africa and of east European migrants through the Pyrenees in the days before the amnesty took effect.

The amnesty is an attempt to reorganize that thousands of migrants are already working illegally without paying taxes or joining the social security system.

It is also underpinned by a desire to keep a closer eye on foreigners after the al-Qaeda-linked bombings that killed 191 people on March 11 last year.

Most of the Islamic militants accused of carrying out the attacks were born in Morocco and many of the victims were also immigrants.

To qualify, migrants must have an identity document, prove they were in Spain before last August, have a job contract for at least the next six months and have no criminal record.

Some 160 Social Security offices throughout Spain will open in the evening for the next three months to accept applications for residence and work permits, the government said on Sunday. Reuters

18 friends die in gas leak

CASTELLON, Spain—Spain rose to mourning Monday after 18 people were killed in their sleep by a gas leak after spending all night celebrating a birthday in a mountain lodge in the east of the country.

Officials said there were only two survivors from the group who stayed the night at the Asis Christmas inn in the village of Tirig, in eastern Spain.

Several political parties quickly announced the suspension on Monday of campaigning for a referendum on the EU constitution, as a mark of respect to the dead.

It was the worst such accident in Spain in more than a decade, according to emergency workers.

Local officials said the victims ranged in age from 17 to 40, most of them friends.

Silvia Puig, the owner of Mont-sonet in Spain before last August, have a job contract for at least the next six months and have no criminal record.

Some 160 Social Security offices throughout Spain will open in the evening for the next three months to accept applications for residence and work permits, the government said on Sunday. Reuters

tanong ng Bayan
ABC
Year of the Rooster!
Buena para sa 'Pinas!
Text na!

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OPINION

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The greatest moral issue

EDITORIAL

LAST Friday in London, on the eve of a meeting of the leaders of the world's richest nations, former South African president Nelson Mandela demanded freedom for the millions of "slaves" of poverty all over the world. He said, "Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural."

Mandela said poverty is man-made and can be eradicated by the actions of human beings. "And overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity it is an act of justice," he said.

To the credit of many of the world's leaders, they recognize that poverty is the No. 1 economic, social and political issue of our times. At the recent annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, for instance, nearly 65 percent of the 700 economic, political, intellectual and cultural leaders of the world chose to make poverty the No. 1 item on the agenda.

At the Global Town Hall that started this year's WEF meeting, participants said that the problem of poverty is fundamental to everything, and that alleviating poverty would reduce terrorism and instability. Indeed, if the poor nations could be put on the road to progress and prosperity, much of the instability that prevails in the world today could be reduced.

The talk at Davos, surprisingly, did not consist of glittering generalizations and empty rhetoric. In line with this year's motto, "Taking Responsibility for Tough Choices," the world leaders made concrete proposals. British Prime Minister Tony Blair committed the United Kingdom to trade-in-aid to Africa, the poorest continent in the world, and to ensure that aid is more effectively administered.

President Jacques Chirac of France called on the developed countries to fulfill at least as possible pledges made two decades ago to devote 0.7 percent of their gross domestic product to aid for poor nations.

Australian Prime Minister John Howard said that the single biggest contribution the developed world could make to poverty alleviation was to break down trade barriers. "Trade access is worth far more to underdeveloped countries than development assistance," he said.

Celebrity made its power felt in Davos, and not only did they focus attention on the problem of poverty, they raised funds to help alleviate it. For instance, there was Sharon Stone of "Basic Instinct" fame, who suddenly stood up during a discussion on the funding of the war on poverty to say that she was donating $100,000 to combat malaria in Tanzania whose president, Benjamin Mkapa, was one of the panel speakers.

Stone urged the participants to stand up and pledge donations. At the end of the discussion, organizers said they had raised $1 million in pledges. Previously, Bill Gates of Microsoft gave $756 million to vaccinate children all over the world against deadly diseases.

Before the meeting closed, it approved the creation of a fund to accelerate financial aid to the poorest nations and the removal of trade barriers that deprive poor countries of the dividends of global economic growth.

The recently concluded World Economic Forum at Davos stressed the need to address the problem of worldwide poverty before it explodes and causes greater misery and instability. The rich nations—the United States first among them—have to make hard decisions—decisions that will call for the expenditure of huge sums in aid and may work against their economic interests—to reduce the problem of poverty.

Right now, about 1,800 million people all over the world go hungry every day, according to the Global Governance Initiative Annual Report. We cannot imagine people of the rich nations going to bed every night without a twinge of conscience, without giving a thought to the 800 million of their fellow human beings who are hungry and destitute and deprived.

Unless the problem of poverty is relieved soon, the eventuality that President Jacques Chirac warned of in a special message to the forum could occur in panic. Chirac warned that the young people of the developing world could rise in revolt if the rich countries do not provide hope for a better future, by offering them a way out of the grinding poverty to which hundreds of millions live in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Which brings us back to Mandela, who said that "while poverty exists there is no true freedom." He said that overcoming poverty is not act of justice. But poverty is not only an issue that involves the economy, geopolitics, social classes or justice. Above all, it is a moral issue; it is perhaps the greatest moral issue of our times. It is a test of the humaneness and humane-ness of people and nations who can do something to alleviate poverty and yet do nothing because of miserliness, selfishness or self-interest.

Reverse bumber harvest

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"If 800 are awards, and awards. But for three hemorrhages, Ateneo is no Cebu City's Abreza Sonza Osmeña.

For the Charter Day blast on Feb. 24, Osmeña has handpicked 10 awardees. He defended his controversial choice in recently-passed, 6901 Abreza Barangay, backlashed with three sitting senators before Thanksgiving.

Dumpit will get a P50,000 prize to support evening runs.

"I'll accept it, as I need the cash for my crews," said the man who has been unfairly ambushed. Dumpit's crews, after 22 culinary examinations, have shutdown roundabouts in 16 streets.

The P50,000 is from the Ramon Magsaysay Awards, the kind the President agrees is stated, cheats its poor, alongside Osmeña's grandinger in the metrowaves over vigilante rub-outs?

Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, the long-tenured the of the Philippines and other groups have protested against the killings. The most recent, among many, were those from the Philippine Jesuit Prison Service Foundation, which has opened a farm and livelihood center for former prisoners.

"Crime committed in stop crime makes no sense," said Fr. Horacio (Boy) de la Costa, SJ, who founded the multi-purpose coop. "Nobody was born a criminal. It is a sick society that breeds criminals."

Osmeña endorsed the Arroyonomics' farm-and-market-to-consumer trade agenda. "I may have inspired P20,000 for every criminal 'neutralized' or 'permanently disabled.'"

The banner body counts is 23. So, has he distributed P460,000 for snap executions? Who exactly should be dumped his holidaymaker (cupcake) awards on progressive agencies like PAL, Ayala Alabang, telecom companies for scoring changes, etc.

Founded in 1970 by seven Manila-based underpinners, Lamparas modelled itself on Pasuk, the British finance magazine. It's parodies of Playboy, New Yorker and A.B.-K. Bobbsey's "Lord of the Rings" were also refreshing. Osmeña initially did not relish his appointee.

Mocking praise is legal. Filipinos are guaranteed by the good. Remember those wisecracks about Jose Velarde, Jose Pidal and nine Gerentes Garcia and Ligot? Satire is a legitimate tool in a democracy. It can bring accountability from officials. "Parody is a game for under in a prison," Vladimir Nabokov said.

Osmeña inflicts his crudity on those who like many, his his comments, dance that's never Cebu style." Cebu Daily News noted: In its "Pro to the letter" editorial. "They prefer to what is popular in the moment—and thereby lower the ongoing political mark."

But scandals and some misgovernance have nagged the city's administration. The legislative put Cebu stepped comments with the country's hottest foreign DJ. Every man, woman and child within the city must repay P66,666 each. He tells AbsCBN-news it PR5 million debt by FY 20 Mbm, the Commission on Audit reminded him.

That means a jumble of additional taxes. He does his hedging second dump trucks disguised as loud new. His try to over-pumping. In over 130,000 cable owners daily be strained squalors. Just 10 percent of children, in the city's public schools, suffer malnutrition while 34 per cent lack Vitamin A.

Osmeña has "policy black holes" on land ownership, sewerage, nutrition, transport, pollution, legislation, schools, rise of street people, Cebu Daily News noted in its commentary. "Malacañang governance." "The vacuum provides temptation for servants from accountability—but a reverse temptation has two of holdovers."

Vigilantes running riot will add one more squish.

Mirrors

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

"SOME people have been asking me who've signed up with us. Self-hoping I'd mention some big names. Well, we haven't have big names. Who cares about big names?"

That was what Randy Pacheco, a youthful idealist at 72, told me when I saw him last week. Pachaco isn't just the prime organizer of the Gawad Sochi in this country, he is the prime organizer of a new kind of political party in this country. In the head of Kapatiran, a political party that was launched in 2003 but wasn't able to field candidates in the elections last year for lack of time—and money.

If you want to know what's new in the game, at least as far as the serious aspirations of people who want to go into politics go. To do so, you must first footwear the "park lawn," the very reason people want to become congressman or senator in the first place. The one becomes obsessive-compulsive with the other. Congressmen are people who hold on if not to the actual monies to be disbursed to their pet projects at least to the power to determine what those pet projects would be and who gets to carry them out. The last surviving remnants of Bicutan is a testament.

I'll just jot down a few of the other motivations and things the party stands for and express intentions to obey religiously under "political discipline," "abolish all forms of gambling, whether run by government or the private sector," "abolish the death penalty," "real democratic reforms in schools," under "social democracy" "abolish the 'park lawn' system," "make it a criminal offense for anyone to carry a gun or any other deadly weapon in public places," "end the practice of appointing Supreme Court justices on account of national defense," "landless elected and appointed public officials from running regular elections, acting in movies and TV shows, and acting as commentators or anchorpersons on radio and TV, and appearing on TV and radio as interviewers and guest advertisements and billboards." There's more, but you get the drift.

Now from someone is so outside luminously and mundane if you can count one prospective mem-

ber of the group beyond the fingers of your hands. Your second assertion is to wonder why that is your first reaction. Because to see this as the product of naïveté or a keen hold on the issues of the country must necessarily reflect on what you take to be sophistication and savvy in the country's conditions of your political or social life. Or put another way, to see this as a pipe dream is to show what you accept as the terms of what is realistic.

In fact, Kapatiran is another one of those rare animals this country is full of that nevertheless refuse things to humans want but really would hope fortune of truth in them. What makes Kapatiran his dramatic bizarre as a political party is that it is organized around ideas, in the sense that the truly democratic, or plain civilized, countries do, but which this country simply does not.

In other countries, people join political parties, in democratic political parties join people, in other countries, political parties are bigger than their members; they have a life of their own that goes on long after individual members have come and gone. In this country members are bigger than their parties and parties rise and fall depending on the fortunes of those who lead them. In other countries, voters vote for which political party can best deliver the things they need. In this country, voters vote for which candidate can best sing the songs they want. Here, where it really matters—party list elections, or a politics like ours?

I've said it before: the thing that's really needs changing is not the country's charter but the country's party system. We never develop any real political party one that stands for something other than a springboard for the rugged individualism of a "presidentiable" or "vice presidentiable," and no amount of Charter change will rescue us from oligarchs or despots. But that's another story.

In our Kapatiran's agenda, you may disagree with it, in some of it, but to see it as something totally out of touch with the country's needs, or have sense to accept, as possible. Who should we naturally feel reasonable the idea that no politician holds the right mind will let his umpiring extort clean personal gain, as in the case for the Senate impeachment trial? Or who should we push hard? Why should we not demand from public servants an unyielding devotion to render public service?

The Kapatiran motto is "Common good is paramount to self," and it does make sense. If I recall right, there was what Russell Crowe in John Nash proposed in "A Beautiful Mind": Everyone looks out for himself, everyone loses. Everyone looks after the group, everyone gets the best. When applies to getting laid or on football, it also applies to getting elected to a country. If I recall right again, Nash was thought of as a crackpot. What's for party was, but clear, not, a crackpot story.

We'll hear no end of groans and sighs from Filipinos today, despairing of this country ever growing more. This country has become so miserable, the refrain goes, but there is no alternative. In the last test, GMA sucks but Erap, who proposes to dislodge her in turn, does so even more. Well, alternatives are always available. The only reason they're not is that we don't want to find them. That we're always locked in the rut to recognize them when they present themselves. Or this country has become so locked in its predestined rut, so topsy-turvy, we find the alternatives unreal, or we find the unreal alternatives.

What we've always lacked in the will to do them, perhaps—and we've left it impossible on that self, only death Deutschen. Heroes in lies in America.

Who really is the standpat in this case?

Opening ARMM's window to the world

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cabrales

EVEN as the autonomous region bemoans pro-autonomy legislators and what Muslims in opposed to any kind of meddling by foreign interlopers here, there's talk that entire local executives are already stalking overseers to make a quick buck from the mining companies. This is one problem the administration-in-waiting needs to look into as part of its "moral duty" for the Islamics. There local officials could ruin all the foreign capitalists.

* * *

Some bishops have expressed a negative view on the entry of foreign investors into mining. But the question is, what's their alternative to the grinding poverty on the rural areas and the lack of development and work opportunities there? In the battle of the earth versus the stomach, the latter usually wins. In the process, whose voracious needs first see people from the bondage of poverty. One local capitalist, who don't have the capacity or tap those interests, says no one need foreign investors. This doesn't mean he is an economic nationalist. What he's saying is that the government can fire the foreign capitalists in, but it must regulate their activities in relation to capital expenditure and to possible mining on what this Filipino people, the real owners of the minerals, will get in return for the mining that's clear-witness. To close one's mind to this reality is to be anti-Filipino.

* * *

In our recent ADB interviews with Islamist leaders in Washington and Malaysian Opposition Member Marcos, they stressed the crucial role that the private sector is playing in support of state agencies—helping them fill the problems of ignorance, poor education, and graft and corruption. One non-governmental group is the Islamic Da'wah Council of the Philippines Chairman Abdullah Dimaporo. Its IDCPI) which operates the Dimaporo Channel (ADC), does only curriculum-based educational TV in its compound. Two weeks ago, IDCPI president, Hiza Lopez-Dimaporo, daughter of Lanao Norte's Cheryll Dimaporo—helping them fill the problems of ignorance, poor education, and graft and corruption. She now operates a cable channel, ADC, which is part of the Knowledge Channel Foundation, Inc. (KCFI), which operates the Knowledge Channel (KCh), the only curriculum-based educational TV in the country

Recall Maynilad's franchise

THE STRETCH limit Delta Coalition welcomes the release of Maynilad's $106-million performance bond to the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS). We, however, consider the MWSS for this belated move, as the government should have saved millions of pesos had the MWSS drawn on the performance bond immediately after the June 2004 Supreme Court decision.

Since March 2001, Maynilad has defaulted in paying the concession fees to the MWSS in P2 billion monthly by unjustifiably invoking force majeure to more than P60 billion. Thus, the US$110-million (roughly P6-billion) performance bond is not even enough to cover the whole amount of unpaid concession fees.

Maynilad's consortium lives are saved to finance old maturing loans of the MWSS. Due to Maynilad's failure to pay the concession fees, the MWSS was forced to incur more debts from bridge financiers to avoid the default in its old maturing loans. The beloved government-owned MWSS is financing on the performance bond consultancy, therefore, as the worsening condition of the government's fiscal health.

Our latest experience with Maynilad should serve as a warning to the government's chronically inept and opportunist that will result in further exacerbation of the situation. This includes the present Maynilad rehabilitation plan proposed by the court-appointed receiver. To the mind of consumers and taxpayers, the purpose of rehabilitation is nothing more than a government bailout of a floundering private company by using public funds.

To add insult, it is a bailout couched in the kindness of Maynilad in payment for public benefits incurred in the face crisis.

Maynilad's rehabilitation runs before it a further nightmare that the private sector is not as efficient and cost-effective as propagandized under privatization claim made.

Thus, via PDC calls on the government to stop nodding blameless. Instead of rehabilitation, the government should immediately terminate Maynilad's concession agreement.

—PILSON PORTALES,
vice president, Freedom from Debt Coalition, 34 Mariposa St., Central District, Quezon City

HACIENDA LUISA workers commemorating the Jan. 21, 1987 Mendiola Massacre when it happened

GMA intervention urged in Hacienda Luisa row

THE WORSENING peace and order situation in the province of Tarlac is very disturbing, a blatant disproval of promises in Hacienda Luisa in Nov. 16, 2004 left at least seven people dead, a large peasant leader was shot by gunmen wearing police uniforms and two peasant workers were ambushed death after they were shot at close range in their barangay in the Hacienda. These and the persistent move of several migrant farm workers—a leader and his son, together with seven others—who are widely believed to have been killed during the massacre.

And yet the Hacienda Luisa on this is only two months old. This labor problem, stirring right in the backyard of a former president, is nowhere near any positive resolution after the Congress on Agrarian Unit closed its door to any talks with the striking workers. We expect a lengthy labor row and, possibly, more violence in the hacienda.

As for Inquirer, we are living witnesses to the sufferings of our people in this sprawling sugarcane province too. We remember how the hacienda folks were transported to have the military tanks and fight for President Aquino during the 1986 Edsa uprising. We heard President Aquino's promise, during her presidential campaign, to redistribute the Luisa lands to its tillers. Each year how her administration eventually broke that promise. We have seen how the cries of thousands of our people inside the hacienda were deprived of decent life after they were allowed a measly pay slip of P9.50 worth of food for over a week.

It is saddening that since the killings and homelessness inside the hacienda started, President Macapagal-Arroyo has yet to say something about the plight of our people in the hacienda, while the labor department, the police and the military are only too willing to play to the tune of Rep. Benigno Aquino Jr.

Philippine's President Arroyo, in La. but Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas, and to our lawmakers to please exercise the Cojuangco-Aquino clan to sit down and talk with the protestors. With every violence incident and the escalating tension inside Hacienda Luisa, Tarlac province might adopt a Harare city of the Luisa folks. Only through solutions dialogue—witness the goons and the military—will this labor row be settled and further violence averted.

—EDUARDO L. DELA CRUZ,
president, Alyansa Ilgina Pki, Isabac-Alpha chapter

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of meat and plants by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo 30 tech, City of Makati, or send a fax to Nos. 897-0793, 897-8794, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph

All sorts of letters to the editor are required to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Another political payback

THE APPOINTMENT of Alberto B. Lina as customs commissioner has understandably come again the petitioning of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Personally, I do not know or have met Lina, a brother of former interior secretary Jose Lina, who actively campaigned for the election of Mr. Arroyo. Nonetheless, Alberto's being the present chair of the Philippine Institute of Certified Freight Forwarders/Federal Express, immediately raises a lot of eyebrows, to say the least. Lina's appointment is akin to exposing whistle the Hoch to refrain from participating for fear of bounty.

Of course, Jim always on her spokesperson, Ibrahim Ignacio Bunoz, can always claim that Lina will serve via the arts his present employer and divest himself of any and all interests conflicting with his position as customs commissioner. If you believe that line, you must also believe in the tooth fairy.

—LT. COL. EDILBERTO DE GUZMAN, III, Villanueva de Ores Bldg., Pearson St. Ermita, Makati City

First Gen not with YNN

THERE is no reference to Hon. Cruz's collusion, titled "Dominion on Mankind, power or plain bonding," 1758, 2: 2-592.

First of all, we categorically state that we have no business or personal relationship with PMS, the winning bidder for this shoddy matter.

Second, the arguments that Meralco and First Gen completed on that they would emerge as the winning bidder defies logic.

1. Had we conspired, we would have made sure that PMS submitted a bid just higher than ours, not doubling it. We offered some $275 million. The highest of PMS, close to the cost of a brand-new plane, seems as much money on the table for PAGAS if a land indeed been accompanying.

2. Our argument that would be competitive some 10% may simply double as before to Meralco bid guarantee; there is small chance the Meralco men to Pilot Circle a much lower bid price. Such a conclusion fails to recognize an important element of the "Bid Rules." We completely misread the point that the First Gen bid of $275 million is not necessarily the lowest acceptable price of $200 million. The minimum bid price was later announced only after the bids were all submitted. As for the "Bid Rules," it does not automatically fall into First Gen's lap! That, the acceptance theory that just doesn't simply does not hold water.

Moreover, a number of factors affected our bid offer which are important to recognize. Let me just mention two.

1. The Bulfas—Meralco has an

Not behind 'bogus' raid

told? are with me the Jan. 20 kidnap-slay "Officer behind 'bogus' raid to get trial ended" by Christian G. Esguerra. "But some story also contains a curious sketch of an unusual saying, "Pilatos ang gobyerno mahaba."

Let me point out that I was never in any way directly or indirectly involved in the raid carried to me and my unit, the National Capital Region Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (NCRCIDG). It was the CIDG unit of the CIDG, led by Capt. Jesus Calderon, that undertook the raid. Those actions that indicate that "the Philippine National Police leadership thinks that it deserve the Distinguished Conduct Medal from President Macapagal-Arroyo" (sic) are mere nothing of the sort will happen. I have not been selected to the PNP leadership to receive such honors. The only medals my superiors and I have received in connection with the kidnap-slay incident were a certificate of appreciation from the Philippine Army and other media people to get the credit about the raid straight from him. When he phoned me last Jan. 20 to complain about the article, he admitted that he did his raid at the NCR-CIDG now at the site through only an unsigned sent. In fact, he made himself quite available for interview with reporters as well.

On Diplan: Green defect. I never wrote that it was his report. My previous articles on the environmental will make that clear.

—BRENTON VALVERDE, PDI reporter

Robbed in a drug store

ABAYan's one-liners a victim of a highway robbery?

Indeed, if not, you don't have to wait for that incident to happen to you. All you have to do is go to a drugstore and buy some medicines.

If you're running a terrible sore/headache, chances are your dentist will prescribe so many medicines which you can't help but be more worried about to eliminate the infection—and the pain...after which a drug team will be made whether or not the aching tooth has to be removed.

And since you will have to take the 250 or 500 mg antibiotics capsules three times a day for seven days that means you will have to buy 21 capsules or the able to complete with your dentist's prescription.

Oh, you're still fine up to that point. But the moment you pay for the 21 capsules, which now cost you P1,200 in P40 each, that's the only time you will feel how it is to be robbed by the country's drug manufacturers.

assumed that it would be reluctant to sign any new power purchase contracts. We certainly did not assume a Meralco deal in our bid. Also, it would be difficult to finance the Manulas purchase at a high bid price even if Meralco was willing to sign a contract. Meralco's credit ratings have deteriorated in recent months and has worsened again with the recent Court of Appeals decision. Without a Meralco contract and the difficulty of financing, we believe that our bid price was fully justified.

2. Additional investments.—The verbatim oral minutes reveals that several millions of dollars will have to be invested to bring the plant to reliable operating conditions. This is significant as it will affect the overall economics. Again, this is not to say that all economics. Again, this is not to say that all economics would, was will maintain a responsible bid.

In closing, let me say that we initially pursued our interest in the Manulas plant with a consortium of five in mind. Three potential partners dropped off principally because of the concerns raised above. Others stayed without the fourth potential partner because of disagreement over partnership roles.

We therefore to have finished with a high bid of $165 million nevertheless as, and we wish the PMS consortium the best of luck with its operations.

—PETER D. GARRUCHO JR., vice chair and CEO, First Generation Holdings Corp., 4/F Insigora Bldg., Ecclesiastic Road cor. Mendoza Avenue, Pasig City

—FERDERICK L. LACSINA,
police senior superintendent and chief,
National Capital Region Criminal Investigation and Detection Group,
Camp Crame, Quezon City

JDT original lead was quite straightforward, making use of Muslims' evidence of the raid merely as a background.

But Senior Superintendent Lacsina accuses himself from the raid he launches his fellow CIDG officials admitted this separate and other media people to get the credit about the raid straight from him. When he phoned me last Jan. 20 to complain about the article, he admitted that he did his raid at the NCR-CIDG now at the site through only an unsigned sent. In fact, he made himself quite available for interview with reporters as well.

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—BRENTON VALVERDE, PDI reporter

Inq.Net

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Is the government justified to raise the value-added tax (VAT) from 10 percent to 12 percent? Why or why not?

VAT kani na usapan? Eh ki sya kasing dami ng binabayad (VAT) a very discard ka ki (200) ka pa PhilCare Account affection ki (200) the people: ano'ng, talaga pa? ano ba. Brighter ang panahon na mararanasan? para nating talusan o kanan ng Tax (VAT)—Undisplay.

—**Fiore Gutrara**
Unknown city

why raise the Tax but where more don with billion from the overseas it back in corruption, supposed ing talaga tanga ano!
—**T. Baldovino, 32**

no. if it goes upwards it some effect in stopping corruption, as it is trying to control Not, dito man? Da a hand 2 raise it un.
—**Gerard Gamban,**
dunno city

no, its too much! what will then happen I as Filipinos? poor are getting poorer, the rich are getting richer. Why?
—**mary g. subaybar,**
unseen city

No, bacas most of it them coverd by all I are used by Gobbldu & Imelda or income groups. Only! Why not raise it pork barrel?
—**Ma. Herbert L. Manipol,**
Batangas, dunnow

Uca may pay. We know 2 / take it kit. tax yan 2 help our country from

—**Jim Bancol,**
Unknown City

no, another p.t.a. i.d people. Why not process the tax cheaters, greedy businessmen, lazy tax, if unknown, dunning. Tax rates enough.
—**mandog...mo**

no, bcoz it govt. shud let you fly more in tax collections. Gather from those not pay & collect! Why only 10% ? 12% is ok with it.
—**John edward ensong,**
bayonan city

Hindi, man kung tatagasing comunidad ang Filipinos. Sabihin nga nothing yung tao ang sabihan yan maguda'ng kay sa dagdag na BIR?
—**Ma. Katherine Haya,**
Paranaque

no, there are other sources if govt. can generate income from like subsidy if it is it can control exporters.
—**Elvie, arthritis,**
metro city

It's not how much they collect that, what matters is it tells the administration to use a lot of people don't understand govt's consequences of it also.
—**glenda sandoz,**
mandaluyong city

message: the LINA is her ex-asset. intent can't reject. BIG-BIR import-

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Across the NATION

Clash signals all-out war vs Reds

By Jobo S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and Alexis Pupa in Manila

COMMUNIST rebels rejected yesterday a condition that they cease fire for peace talks to resume as a top military officer in Mindanao ordered a full-scale assault against the guerrillas.

Lt. Gen. Alberto Braganza, Southern Command chief, said at least 10 government troops and a guerrilla were killed in a clash with soldiers of the 36th Infantry Battalion in Compostela Valley.

Braganza said two MG-520 helicopters were sent from Camp Lumbia City to the area to "neutralize those rebels."

In a statement issued by the Communist Party of the Philippines posted on their website, the CPP said that by setting the condition, the government "abrogates the Arroyo administration's undertaking The Hague Joint Declaration signed by the two sides in 1998.

"If the Arroyo regime prefers impending for a ceasefire as a precondition, it might as well call for an end to formal peace negotiations and demonstrate to the entire world that it is no longer interested in holding and addressing the roots of the civil war in the Philippines," the statement said.

On the other hand, the CPP said the NDF [National Democratic Front] will continue to assert that peace negotiations be conducted along the framework of The Hague Joint Declaration, adhered with the Arroyo regime at the regime that succeeded," it said.

The Hague Joint Declaration sets the framework and agenda of the peace negotiations.

The CPP said that by signing the agreement, "the [government] has bound itself to discuss the matter of a ceasefire and the disposition of the armed forces of both parties only after having negotiated and settled the outstanding serious issues, and political issues that are at the core of the present armed conflict."

"By setting a ceasefire as a precondition for peace negotiations, the Arroyo regime is determined to scuttle the Hague Joint Declaration," the CPP said.

The communists said they continue to respect the Philippine Constitution and its use as a framework for the talks.

Peace talks hit a stop in August 2000 when the NDF withdrew from the negotiating table over the United States' relabelling of the CPP-NPA-NDF as a terrorist organization.

The NDF accused the government of not exerting enough effort in having the terror tag removed. Government officials, however, said the removal of the tag rests solely on the actions of the communist movement.

The tough talk came as two Army platoons encountered about 300 New People's Army rebels in Compostela, triggering more than two hours of fighting, military spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said.

Pascual said the military could not retrieve the slain rebels but [illegible] soldiers' account.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye called on the rebels to "channel the energies of armed revolution," saying "a ceasefire is feasible and will bring the peace talks to a principled conclusion."

Government troops came under fire from another front in Mindanao as the terrorist group Abu Sayyaf attacked an army detachment in Indanan, Jolo.

Maj. Bartolome Bacarro, spokesperson of the Philippine Army, told reporters that some 60 members of the Abu Sayyaf stormed the command post of the army's 32nd Infantry Battalion. [illegible] from Inquirer wires

N. Vizcaya village execs say they did not approve mining

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Village officials on Saturday denied having declared that tribal folk in a remote village in upland Nueva Vizcaya, some 70 kilometers from here, have approved a large-scale mining project to be conducted there.

Antonio Dingeng, village chief of Barangay Didipio, expressed concern over how members of a supposed barangay assembly, which was organized by processing villagers last year, were now being cited as proof that the project had been accepted by most villagers. Didipio is the site of the proposed gold-copper project being pushed by Climax Arimco Mining Corp. (CMAC), an Australian firm.

The project, scheduled to operate for 15 years, is expected to yield about four million ounces of gold and 1.3 billion ounces of copper deposits, covers some 37,000 hectares near the Nueva Vizcaya-Quirino border.

According to the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, the social acceptability of any mining project must first be obtained before actual operations would be allowed.

Questioned assembly

In pursuing its application, officials of CMAC and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau claimed that Didipio residents had given their approval of the mining project during a barangay assembly meeting on Oct. 30 last year.

Dingeng, however, denied this, saying that the barangay assembly, attended by pro-mining villagers, was conducted without his knowledge or that of a majority of the barangay council.

A group of Didipio residents has been opposing the mining project due to the supposed environmental destruction it would bring to their village.

According to the minutes of the Oct. 16 meeting, only three of the 109 officials were present during the assembly. Council member Henry Siaty, who presided over the meeting, cited a circular from the Department of Interior and Local Government that assemblies must be conducted on the day in all barangays nationwide.

In the minutes, Raul Bagyalet, former village chief and a mining supporter, added that the assembly of they wanted the CMAC project to operate.

"The assembly decided in unison, we want the area to operate, we give our full support," the document said.

But Dingeng said those who took advantage of the Oct. 16 declaration to call for a general assembly in the village without notifying the officials.

Wrong forum

Council member Nora Dayao said he went to the meeting upon hearing that DILG representatives were conducting the barangay assembly.

"I left because I found out that the meeting was organized by pro-mining officials and that the barangay captain and the other council members did not have stood it," he said.

Asuel Bongo, CMAC project engineer, said the CMAC did not have a hand in the conduct of the barangay assembly. He said approval of the mining project during the assembly, which was attended by 165 of the 683 registered voters in Didipio, was valid.

Aniejo, however, admitted that a CMAC employee recorded the proceedings. Melvin Bacero, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Followers of Nur attack Army detachment in Jolo

HUNDREDS of armed followers of a jailed former Muslim rebel leader attacked government troops and occupied at least one army detachment on Jolo island yesterday, sparking clashes that wounded at least two soldiers, military officials said.

The attacks by about 500 followers of Nur Misuari in Jolo's Panamao and at least two other nearby towns were apparently roused off by a disagreement over recent military offensives against the Muslim separatist group who Misuari has allowed his [illegible], Army Maj. Gen. Agapito Demanda said.

Fighting seemed to be removed in Panamao's 300 villages, where up to 3000 gunmen attacked and occupied an army company detachment near a civilian hospital, Demanda said.

Demanda urged the attackers to withdraw from the area to avoid full-scale fighting, stressing they were not being targeted by government troops in recent offensives.

"We're not running after them," Demanda said. "They should withdraw or there would be no escalation of this fighting and we would not have to use bombs and stronger weaponry."

Ordinals said he would ask local civilian officials to intervene to halt the clashes. AP

Townsfolk protest closure of exit road

LUCENA, Quezon—Officials, residents and businessmen here stormed at, literally, night a three-day vigil to protest the closure of the Barangay Ibby temporary exit along the South Luzon Expressway.

The group, led by Mayor Amando Cruz, displayed coffins and placards and lighted candles near the route to symbolize the death of the town's progress due to the exit's closure.

Cruz said the closure would mean months' losses worth at least P100 million for the town because businesses in the industrial area may either scale down production or pull out due to the town's inaccessibility. He said the closure would also punish motorists because it is the most convenient route to the town.

The Toll Regulatory Board (TRB), through the Philippine National Construction Corp., on Friday distributed leaflets announcing the closure of the Malagonio and Balagtas (Northbound) Exits.

Several exits along the interlinked SLEx, including Malagonio and Balagtas, will be removed under a new system that will be implemented on the expressway.

Cruz said the closure order involved the municipal government because local officials were not notified of the move. He said he learned of the closure after some residents showed him copies of the notice.

In December last year, Malagonio residents and officials also protested an original closure order, prompting the TRB to extend the opening of the Ibby exit until this month.

Batangas Gov. Jose Antonio de la Cruz in December approved a resolution refusing the closure not only of the Ibby but also of the Mayapangpang and Balagtas exits.

—Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

RESIDENTS of Malagonio, Bulacan bring out their protest against the closure of an exit toll gate leading to their town on the North Luzon Expressway.

Cops raise alarm over arming of fishermen

NAGA CITY—Police here expressed alarm over the arming of commercial fishermen, saying weapons have frustrated attempts by authorities to put a stop to illegal fishing.

Insular Supt. Ramon Magalo, Camarines Sur police chief, said policemen sent to arrest fishermen for trespassing the 15-km municipal fishing grounds feel intimidated by the weapons that the fishermen carry.

Magalo testified the same circumstances he had while he was assigned in Masbate.

He said during his tenure in Masbate, policemen in navigator boats would be forced to retreat upon learning that the commercial fishermen they were running after were fully armed.

He said the armed fishermen sometimes even pursue policemen using their big fishing vessels.

Magalo said he suspects that influential people around the commercial fishing vessels that come from the Visayas and anywhere in municipal fishing grounds around the island province of Masbate.

Fishing vessels weighing more than 3 gross tons are not allowed in these areas.

He said police authorities only participate in anti-illegal fishing operations when requested by local government units. Asst Inspector Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Suspect in slay of witness in Damalerio killing charged

PAGADIAN CITY—A murder case has been filed against the suspect in the killing of Felipe Damalerio, one of the witnesses in the May 2002 murder of journalist Edgar Damalerio.

Senior Supt. Nash Mustafa, police chief of Zamboanga del Sur, told the Inquirer that charges were filed against Mohammad Abdulaie Maulana before the city state prosecution office here last last week.

Mustafa said Maulana was identified by three witnesses as one of the three suspects who shot Amora as he stepped out of the main entrance of the Zamboanga del Sur National High School on July 3.

The three witnesses are civilian volunteers of the barangay government of Sta. Maria district. They identified the suspect through the police's rogue gallery.

Maulana, declared by police as the city's public enemy No. 1, was captured last year in Iligan City for robbery.

The suspect, who is still in his early 20s, was implicated in a string of robberies, carnapping and car theft rings, and in the killing of several policemen in the city.

He was also implicated in the grenade attack on the packing lot of Lt. Gen. Cirilo Roy Baroni last year that left seven people hurt. Maulana and Abdulhan Lucap were charged with extortion and multiple frustrated homicide.

He posted bail and was placed under the custody of a local politician. In Dipolog, Zamboanga del Sur, his hometown.

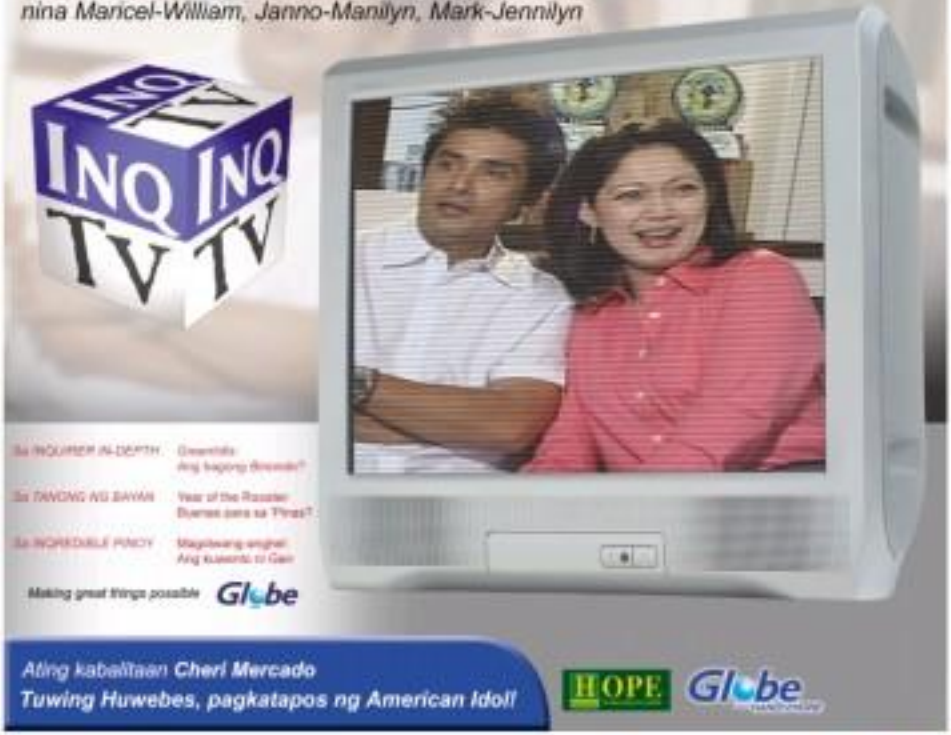
Amora was set to testify in court this month in the Damalerio murder case. Amora and another witness, Edgar Degoc, tagged PO3 Guillermo Pitpitin, a former city police intelligence agent, as the gunman in the Damalerio killing.

Pitpitin is currently detained at the city reformatory center.

—Bernard P. dela Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau

LOVE TEAMS, FOREVER

Di lang pang-Valentine: Mga kuwento (at payo)
nina Maricel-William, Janno-Manilyn, Mark-Jennilyn



Sa INQUIRER IN-DEPTH Dreamlife
ang bagong Binondo?

Sa DANDING AG BAYAN Year of the Rooster:
Buenas zona sa 'Pinas?

Sa INCREDIBLE PINOY Magsilbeang engine!
Ang kuwento ni Gen

Making great things possible Globe

Ating kabalitaan Cheri Mercado
Tuwing Huwebes, pagkatapos ng American Idol!

HOPE Globe

Question of the Week

What is your reaction to Imelda Marcos' elation over the US court ruling preventing human rights victims from sharing $683 million in Marcos assets that was turned over to the government?

Senders of a (1st) E-Text published in Tuesday's **InqBox**, *will each receive an 'Inquirer Mug!'s*

Text your inquirer news
name/city/message.
Text your messages to
2287 (Globe) or 333 (Smart).
(Maximum of 160 characters)

Hike in LGUs' revenue seen in VAT increase

BAGUIO, Cotes—In debates on the controversial value-added tax (VAT) increased, Senate President Franklin Drilon on Saturday stressed that the two-percent increase in the proposed VAT "would surely benefit the local government units" as any increase in tax revenues of the national government would translate to an increase in their internal revenue allotment (IRA).

Drilon, who was here to lead the oathtaking of Benguet Vice Mayor Edwin Mateo and 6,000 residents and barangay officials who joined the Liberal Party in mass, said he believed that the Senate would soon be able to come up with a "more palatable" version of the VAT—one that would get the nod of militant groups and business communities.

He said the public should understand that potential additional revenues from the increase in VAT would help fund the projects of LGUs.

"Any increase in the government's tax collection will definitely help augment the live of the LGUs. That, the increase in IMF will ultimately help our LGUs in taking their fund allocations," Drilon told the barangay.

He said they want just workable revenue to come up with a bill that could withstand the interests of poor Filipinos but at the same time help business prosper.

Drilon said a revitalized IRA would likewise contribute to the government's progress to empower local officials and decentralize the functions of national government agencies.

"If your local governments have the funds to build school buildings, then you don't have to go to my office to re-up others (matters) and congressmen to finance your projects," he said.

Drilon likewise slammed the "warning" of oil companies of suspending oil price increases if their VAT proposal were upheld.

He said oil companies should not pass the burden of the additional taxes to their consumers.

"I think Sen. Ailee (Arroyo) is right when he said that their warning that oil price increase is a blackmail. Oil companies are holding us hostage when they make statements like that," he said.

In another venue, however, another senator said the increase in VAT was likely to make it more difficult for the military to purchase new equipment and supplies.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former Marine general, said the military's fiscal problem was not the answer the Senate has proposed to study a House measure expanding the VAT system.

He said the Senate has agreed to review the impact of the existing VAT system before it can evaluate an extended VAT bill because of evidences that the government failed to plug tax leaks.

The armed forces of the Philippines, which need to receive substantial money from the national purse, will soon compete for allocations in the Senate version of the 2008 General Appropriations Act, said Biazon. *Jim Barnes, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau with a report from Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

PRECIOUS CARGO
A Navy man removes his machine gun as a ruling shows a cargo of illegal lumber confiscated recently at the Mandaue City port. The cargo of lumber, authorities said, was shipped from Mindanao and was intercepted by waters off Cebu.

Slain Kalinga writer's kin in search of lawyer

BAGUIO CITY—The family of the slain Kalinga writer Stephen Ominio is looking for a lawyer to pursue to quest for justice for the murdered journalist.

Vetty Ominio, mother of Stephen, said a lawyer had told the family that the evidence of the murder case wanted to settle the case before it reached the court.

But the mother of Stephen said she wanted to pursue the case and not settle for financial payment, according to Kalinga journalist Rolando dela Alfonso.

He was, including two ac-

tors, was now detained in the Tabuk jail for killing the 29-year-old Ominio. One of the suspects told the police that they had alcoholic drinks in Tabuk on May 28 last year and decided to kill the first person they would see, who happened to be Ominio.

Ominio was stabbed with two-bear sticks. His head was bashed with a rock and his body was dumped near an elementary school, police said.

Two suspects were reached while two others were convicted by their relatives.

Ominio was a editor for the Tabuk-based Cordillera News and a provincial correspondent of the Baguio-based weekly Northern Philippine Times.

Alliance and leaders of the Bago tribe, where Ominio was a member in Kalinga, had condemned moves by some of the relatives of the suspects to settle the case.

Francisco Gabel, chair of the League of Integrated Bago Young Adults, said settlement does not bode well with the province's quest for peace, particularly its rebel-led conflicts.

The killing of Ominio, although not related to his work as a writer and journalist, was counted as among those that made the Philippines a top dangerous place for journalists to work in.

An international group of journalists had criticized the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo for doing too little to prevent the killings of media men in the country. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Baguio looks at new lunar year without mentings scare

BAGUIO CITY—The Year of the Rooster means much more to the local Chinese-Filipino community than a simple reversal of Baguio's meningococcemia outbreak.

Chinese-Filipino businessmen are raising funds to erect a monument to the workers of the historic Session Road, which was built in 1901.

The project will highlight the Spring festival parade on Feb. 13, which will be the first to climb back to the crowd hundreds of Shaanxi C soldiers along with the assorted outdoor and fireworks that have become traditional treats during the annual Chinese New Year festivities.

The ribbon's fabrics are being supplemented to ensure visitors that Baguio celebrates will "take care of them," said Dr. Charles Chong, a Chinese-Filipino civic leader here.

But he stressed that the meningococcemia scare had no basis because the disease "did not break the summer capital between March 2004 and January and has been the usual meningococcemia scare.

"People should not be afraid because if this was really meningococcemia, thousands and thousands of Baguio residents would fall like flies," he said during the festival launch here on Sunday.

"In instead of belaboring the disease, we are concentrating on Baguio's heritage, which is why we are cooperating to build a shrine to the Session Road workers," Peter Ng, parade chair and owner of Hotel Supreme here, said.

The American colonial government hired thousands of migrant workers from 62 countries to help build the modern-friendly sitting road in 1903, according to Erlyn Ruth Alcantara, one of the authors of the book "Japanese Pioneers in Northern Luzon."

The Japanese descendants of workers have erected their own monument in 2005, but the Chinese consistently search one that is devoted to their ancestors and all laborers and workers, said Ng.

He said Baguio's Chinese-Filipino business will still need to raise the descendants of the Chinese workers of Session Road.

Alcantara said the Chinese contractor, who could not take the physical demands of the construction work, remained as silent workers or cooks here.

Along with the Chinese

YOUNGSTERS play with a toy rooster, one of the symbols that has become famous in Baguio City as the Lunar New Year approaches and ushers in the Year of the Rooster.

helped develop Benguet's vegetable industry during the mine period.

Baguio Mayor Braulio Yaranon and Tuba Mayor Jose Balsalobre are still searching for a permanent location for the Chinese monument.

The Benguet provincial board also passed a resolution endorsing the Session Road's inscription as a World Heritage site, at the behest of the Baguio Engineering Movement. *Reports from Vincent Cabreza, Dennis Carino and Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Iloilo hosts grand Lunar New Year fest

By Hazel P. Villa
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—As the only place in the country, next to Manila's Binondo District, to publicly celebrate Chinese New Year in a grand style, the Filipino-Chinese community here wants to give the most elaborate and festive celebration to the country" today at the heart of downtown Iloilo City.

Traffic on Iloilo Boca, Magsaysay and Iznart Streets will be rerouted to accommodate a grand parade for the Sto. Nino at 4 p.m., a cultural program at 5 p.m. and all-night dining and partying at the "Chinese Night Market" set up in Plazoleta Gay the heart of the celebrations.

Iloilo's Chinese-New Year celebrations will be bigger and better. Outside Metro Manila, Iloilo City is the only place that celebrates the Lunar New Year in a grand scale," said Felipe A. Uy-pangco, president of the Philippine-Chinese Charitable Corporation or Iloilo (PCCCI), one of the organizers of the event.

The PCCCI teamed up with the Federation of Chinese-Filipino Chamber of Commerce of Iloilo Inc., headed by Henry G. Chuyaco, for the various activities. Chuyaco formally undertakes to coordinate the third year of the event under the banner of the Iloilo Chinese-Filipino Cultural Foundation Inc. and the Iloilo City government.

Uy-pangco said one of the highlights of this year's celebration is the 28-minute fireworks display at 7 p.m., the first of its kind in Iloilo City" costing P200,000, courtesy of 101 City Iloilo, inbox owner, Henry Yu, a Chinese investor.

Baggios and other visitors will also be treated to 11 Chinese cultural presentations from the city's four partnering Filipino-Chinese schools, the Chinese-Filipino Binon Tongue and the Iloilo South Chapter of Buddha's Light International Association.

Other events after the program include, it country, a Wushu lion-dance performance by the Iloilo Tongues Martial Arts Club and a midnight blast at the Fu Kang Siam Temple in Poniente-Delgado Avenue, to welcome the first of the Rooster.

Organizers gave a conservative estimate of P800,000 to P1 million in expenses just for the program, fireworks and stage decorations alone.

A WOMAN member displays a pack of Hong Bao that became spray-worn with the celebration of the Lunar New Year.

Lawyers' group plans to put forward resolution on fiscal crisis

BAGUIO CITY—The country's lawyers plan to lob this summer for the country's local votes, and they are not talking here of the lack of funds or governmental perseverance.

Lawyer Jose Antonio Cadiz, national president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, said their group plans to pass a resolution to help resolve the financial crisis during the 10th national congress of lawyers at the IAP-tobo Dao Convention Center here in April.

Cadiz said the congress would help the financial crisis of the city because it would be the first big conference to decide to hold a conference here despite the meningococcemia scare that hit Baguio last month.

The congress, which is expected to attract 1,500 lawyers, is held every three years.

"This would be the first time that the convention will be held in Baguio," Cadiz said. "We have been holding it either in Cebu and Davao. We hope to include Baguio in the rotation," he said.

Among the issues expected to be tackled during the convention would be the expected revocation of the VAT exemption for lawyers, considered unconstitutional and a Supreme Court ruling allowing 200 percent foreign ownership of mining firms operating in the country.

Convention coordinator Llewelyn Llanillo said their historical house resort presentation during the convention would be on customers against violence on women.

He said this would be the first time they would include gender issues. "It was not yet rooted and the lady lawyers say that this is an issue closest to their heart," he said.

The moot court will be presided over by newly-installed presiding Justice of the Court of Appeals, Bonso-Samson, a native of Dagupan. Baguio Supreme justice is Chief Justice Alfredo Davide Jr.

IBP Governor Angelina Sanvicente said choosing gender violence as the forward topic was also to launch their conference theme.

"It is somehow related to poverty alleviation because gender violence occurs because of poor economic balance. Most women were forced to submit to violence because of economic reasons," she said. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

'Hacker' says he meant no harm in entry into websites

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Central Luzon Bureau

SAN JOSE CITY—An alleged Philippine computer hacker arrested for cybercrimes denied that he went into hidden websites and left a warning message on the servers.

"I am not hiding nor am I evading the charges against me," said 17-year-old Christ Gene Salazar in an interview with the Inquirer yesterday.

Salazar, 18, said he was ready to face the accusation against him. "My family and I are ready and cleared. In the speech that pictures are in a hacker from justice," he said.

Police earlier launched a manhunt for Salazar, a resident of Jaen district here, after the Manila Regional Trial Court ordered his arrest on Jan. 6, for violating the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000.

Salazar was reportedly the first person to be charged with the offense since the law passed.

But Salazar's lawyer, Rodolfo Ignacio, said his client had already posted a P120,000 bail at the Regional Trial Court Branch 37 in Bulacan on Jan. 27.

"Let us leave it to the justice system to determine whether or not I am guilty of the accusations against me," said Gene.

In a news page invitation, the Department of Justice charged Gene with penetrating the government website www.gov.ph, the National Bureau of Investigation website, the National Book Development Board, the Philippine Navy, Dagupan City and the web servers or computer systems hosting websites of Datamex Corporation, provider of Internet and Electronic Services of the Philippines in the Skypix (IPV) vending machine.

He allegedly also launched attacks against the websites of the Office of the President Malacañang, the Task Force on Security of Critical Infrastructure, the Professional Regulatory Board, the Department of Labor and Employment, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority, and the Internal Group of Companies.

In his counter-affidavit, Gene said he accessed the sites to "find out whether adequate security measures have been put in by the various government and private agencies..."

But he said he had "no intention of corrupting, altering, stealing, or damaging" the sites.

If I had the intention of destroying or corrupting the system, I would not have informed them."

SITE IS MILF BAILIWICK

US execs scout area for new war games

MAGUINDANAO—Representatives from the US Armed Forces and the US Embassy visited this area's MILF Bulawayi Division headquarters here to assess the camp's capability to host International Troops for war games.

Late last week, they just dropped by, surveyed and conferred on the suspension," said Lt. Col. Eusebio Del Prado, 6th ID spokesperson.

The team included James Poles, Joe Tremblay and Frank Petrosevod of the Joint United States Military Assistance Group (Jusmag).

Del Prado said the US troops inspected various buildings and structures that could house some of the camp's capabilities to host International Troops for war games.

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The 6th ID Camp Siongco Lumpilan, Datukan is based in Barangay Awang, just beside the Cotabato Airport.

But Del Prado said there were still no schedule for the war games.

He said the visit by the US officials is possible of boosting US forces in the event joint RP-US military exercises are held here.

In June last year, a team of about 20 US soldiers conducted close-quarter battle training and mountain-top exercises with military forces assigned to the South Central Mindanao regions.

The two-week, small-scale joint military exercises were held at the army's 602nd Brigade, Kidapawan headquarters in Carmen, North Cotabato.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Taliño and Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan had expressed willingness to host US war games in their areas provided they would not disrupt the ongoing peace process," according to MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu.

In Pagadian City, American physicians and their local counterparts will hold a medical mission in two Iba Barug barangays on Friday.

Brig. Gen. Ernesto Cedo, deputy chief of the army's 9th Infantry Division, said the medical mission is a social component of military exercises. Edwin O. Fernandez and Bernie P. dela Cruz, PhilStar.com Reporters

FIND OF DAY
A fisherman rows his canoe as Barangay Boat in Cavite, leave for after a day's work in the sea.

Body of Pinay slain by Jap husband bore torture marks

BAGUIO CITY—She left her family in Tuboy City, Baguio to attend six years ago to work as an entertainer in Japan to have a better life.

But on Sunday, Rose Clemente came home in a box, 18 days after her Japanese husband killed her in a fit of jealousy on Jan. 19.

Her grandmother, Leodin Gimenez, wept upon seeing the bed containing Rose's body in the Bautista airport.

"I know I was very much. When she was here, she used to sleep with me. She said she would come home for a visit... in December but now it is only her corpse that has arrived," said Leodin, who raised Rose after her parents separated.

Her remains now lie at their home in Barangay Bilgaoa Lizares, Tuboy City, for a week after which she would be buried, she added.

Both Japanese fetched Rose's remains in Manila and brought her home on board a Philippine Air Lines flight.

He told the Japanese that he almost fainted when he saw his daughter. "Her body has a lot of bruises and her cheek, hand and feet appear broken, like she also broke like it had been hacked to," he said.

But, he added, there was nothing he could do if they could not secure justice because nothing he could buy was cheap.

Rose was allegedly manhandled by Tatsuya Oshiishi in their house in Edka City, Japan on Jan. 19, in a fit of jealousy. He then put her body in the trunk of his car and went to work with it together with his two children, Japanese. He is now in police custody.

Rose's 9-year-old child from her former boyfriend apparently also have bruises after the incident, Leodin said.

Leodin said the girl was now in the custody of her father Guido P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Gloria switches on power to Pangasinan village

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuentes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SISIL, Pangasinan—For years, residents of the island village of Cabilocan, 15 minutes boat ride from the bank power plant in Pangasinan's mainland, could only stare at the bright lights of the plant.

But electric power finally came to the province of Sisil 14 kilometers away from the 1,000-megawatt power plant that has been providing electricity to the Luzon grid since 1999.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday switched on the power here in Cabilocan (pop. 1,500), marking the 100-percent electrification of Pangasinan's villages.

The President was assisted by assistant Energy Secretary Vicente Perez Jr. and Mauro Feller, corporate executive officer of Mirant Philippines, during the switch-on ceremony.

He hoped to spend in the house of couple Eudes and Andrea Bautista and personally switched on the family's power. She later distributed certificates of energization to families in the village.

Gov. Victor Agbayani said the island's energization would become its potential as one of the tourist destinations in the province.

The availability of electricity is expected to boost local tourism by encouraging a reliable power supply to businesses and by encouraging investment development in the island village, Agbayani said.

Some German visitors were seen on the island during the presidential visit.

This was not actually the first time that Cabilocan residents had a taste of electricity. Mirant has provided two generators to the island but these broke down last year because of overload.

Resident Adela Crasquel, 55, said the old generators provided electricity only from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

She said their power bills depended on how many light bulbs and appliances each family owned. Compared said for each light bulb, a family paid P35 while those who owned TV sets paid P50 a week.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, February 8, 2005
5th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 1:20-2:4
Gospel: Mark 7:1-13

One day the Pharisees gathered around Jesus and noticed that some who followed the Law who had just come from Jerusalem.

They noticed that some of his disciples were eating their food with unclean hands, that is, without washing them. Now the Pharisees, and in fact, all the Jews, never eat without washing their hands to the elbows, for the tradition of their ancestors. Nor do they eat anything when they come from the market without first washing themselves, and there are many other traditions they observe, for example, the ritual washing of cups, pots and plates.

So the Pharisees and the scribes who had come asked him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders, but eat with unclean hands?"

Jesus answered, "You, hollow people! How well Isaiah prophesied of you when he wrote: This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Their reverence for me is mere pretense, for while they teach human rules as doctrines, they reject the commandments of God to hold fast to human traditions."

And Jesus commanded, "You have a fine way of disregarding the commandments of God in order to establish your own traditions! For Moses said: Do your duty to your father and your mother, and whoever curses his father or his mother is to be put to death. But according to you someone could say to his father or mother: 'Whatever support you might have had from me is dedicated to God' (that is, 'offered to God'), what you could have done for me is done, and you no longer have to do anything for your father or mother. In this way you disregard the word of God through the tradition you have handed on. And you do many other things like this."

Commentary:

Jesus is accused by the Pharisees of traditional points of practice—not the core elements of the law of Moses that taught us that the people together in justice so that others would see the presence of The Holy One among them in their lives. Jesus condemns them because "You have put aside the commandment of God to hold fast to human traditions." Jesus is not against the keeping of ritual, or the transformational awareness of religion to arouse the extraordinariness of caring for one's parents and family members—as Isaiah would's word of hope and justice and we do many other things like that. Things aside human traditions that do not help develop the community of service where all mind, compassion and dignity for others and elders are given. Here he cites an obligation found in our Ten Commandments, how to treat or to avoid contact as to obedience of the basics of living human rights. Yes.

Quick-response team sought vs Ilocos killings

LAOAG CITY—Officials here are seeking the revival of a quick-response patrol team, similar to Aguila's Unit 911, to control the rash of murders in the province.

The Antique Department of Public Safety, in support of then Secretary Rafael Lacaste, also mentioned that only after the organization and establishment of the Aguila's Unit 911 can the province be free from the scourge of criminality.

Lacaste said the DPS personnel, a former secretary said earlier that he was assigned by volunteers personnel, is seen to be trained watching his unit early into his tenure.

The DPS deactivation lasted up the split between Ilocos and Surigao, who were former secretaries and political allies.

Ilocos, who is still in Ilocos for an official business, could not be reached for comment.

Some Ilocos mayors and vice mayors raised the intention of the DPS patrol during a meeting on Thursday following the murder of Laoag Vice Mayor Jimmy Chua early Wednesday outside a subdivision.

Acting Ilocos Norte Gov. Winnifred Marcos A. Ilocano promised in 1998.

Marcos doubted the DPS patrol, a former secretary said earlier that

Docs sue hospital

11 cops linked to Soriano sacked

By Leila B. Salaverria

THOSE doctors have taken their employment issues to court by filing a civil complaint against officials of a private hospital in Manila that allegedly deprived them of their professional rights.

Doctors Evelyn Ong Chuang, Jesus Lee Lopez and Gloria Jo Yu of the 1900-bed Veterans Hospital on Mississippi Street, Manila, Manila, filed a P500,000 damage suit against the hospital last Friday at the Manila Regional Trial Court 08, for of the Clerk of Court. The doctors alleged that they had lost their rights, or admitting privileges, to accept patients at the hospital. The complainants have been longtime practitioners at the hospital.

Admitting privileges gave doctors the right to refer their patients to the hospital for medical purposes, and to use hospital facilities. Jerva E Quinsaculo and Christian F Bhagtang, trainee

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE MALAY one top commander and 10 other Manila police officers were relieved from their posts yesterday because of their alleged links to Marlo Soriano, a detained agent of the National Bureau of Investigation associated recently on suspicions that he was involved in kidnapping for ransom activities.

The move came after Western Police District director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong received a report allegedly implicating the 11 Manila policemen in Soriano's "holdup" activities, which involved arresting people, and later releasing them in exchange for money.

The higher-ranking police officer relieved was Supt. Marcelino Bolivar, Malate police station commander. Bolivar, 51 and Chief Inspector Jaime Capellan and PO3 Ramil de Guzman, both from the Ermita police station; SPO2 Elmer Manalang from the Sta. Mesa police station; PO2 Ronald Rivera from the Binondo police station; and PO2 Ronnie Nicasio from the District Detention Board Patrol Unit.

In a statement, Bulaong said that he was not saying the 11 men were involved in Soriano's alleged activities, but he said they could not return to their posts while an investigation into the matter is pending.

Bulaong had called for the investigation after receiving a report implicating the 11 men in "holdup" activities with Soriano.

"As I had said before, the WPD does not tolerate police officers involved in illegal activities. We don't want to give them a chance to tarnish the image of the police force," the WPD chief said.

Soriano's arrest on Jan. 31 for alleged kidnapping opened a can of worms after it was revealed that Soriano had reportedly received protection from high ranking law enforcers.

Soriano started as a civilian agent at the NBI, moving on to become an intelligence agent before his dismissal in 1999 after a checkered career with the bureau.

A ranking NBI official said yesterday that even before Soriano's arrest, the NBI had been looking for the former agent because he had failed to return two guns—a 9 mm and a long firearm—issued to him.

The two were used a radiovocator, once had been fired against the former "asset" for failing to turn in the guns after his dismissal from the service.

The frequent assassinations of the NBI's name with Soriano had also riled NBI agents.

An agent said yesterday that Soriano was besmirching the bureau's name when he was not even a regular agent.

"We find it hard to accept that the NBI's name is being dragged into the issue," said the investigator.

"Marlo Soriano was not even a regular agent, "he added.

Mandaluyong pit: No danger, but an eyesore

By Luige A. del Puerto

WHAT THEY supposed to be 20-meter excavation site in the center of Old-gas Avenue and Edsa? What is being done to ensure motorists fall into the hole? And until when will it stay uncovered?

After a jeep full of people fell into an excavation site in Mandaluyong City last year, former Mayor Benhur Abalos said he wanted the open pit filled so it would not pose a danger to people. Current Mandaluyong Mayor Neptali "Boyet" Gonzales said he would look into it.

Nagtahan has already hidden the pit and it seems it will take months before construction on the site can continue and before the hole is covered.

City Engineer Gerardo Arena described the abandoned excavation site as an "eyesore" but not a "danger" to the said property consumers.

Gonzales said its safety railings around both sides is fine as long as it high speed around the holes.

"This is an intersection so buses and jeeps would normally slow down," he said, adding that there was no danger from said excess—the developer had supposedly to shut the hole up soon.

The killing of the PDP officer was attributed to the New People's Army for the 60th discovered the assassination.

It would be best for higher headquarters to look into the current. The same permits to this day even after many months have passed since the ambush.

* * *

Bulaong seems to be enjoying the confidence—too much confidence, in fact—of President Macapagal-Arroyo because he's not been transferred to another post even if he's been WPD chief for more years.

The longest that an officer can stay in the post is two years.

WPD directors are selected by Malacañang. One of the criteria is the director's closeness to the President.

But Bulaong has stayed far too long at his post. Many PNP officers who look at the WPD position with acute eyes are complaining.

Say goodbye to new 'Smokey Mountain'

By Tara V. Quintanilla

PLANS are afoot to make the Payatas garbage dump in Quezon, Manila, "disappear."

"At the end of the year, our goal is to have zero waste at Pier 18," said Rafael Bernardo, Manila Department of Public Services (DPS) chief. The department is committed to enforce Republic Act 9003—Republic Act 9003, by December, the DPS expects to close the tons of trash at Pier 18, the open dump on a seven-hectare lot owned by the National Housing Authority that was dumping up to another Smokey Mountain.

Secretaries and BA 9003 prohibited open dumping and allowed only a controlled dump and a sanitary landfill.

A controlled dump resembles the open version but harmful homes are suppressed and trash is compacted through a layer of soil on top of the waste. A sanitary landfill also involves leaching (trash with soil) to minimize negative environmental impact.

Pier 18 is a garbage transfer station where Manila's contractor, United Waste Management, has been dumping trash daily since 2003. Garbage is then hauled to a controlled dump in Navotas within the day.

The open dump used to hold as much as half a million tons of "fresh trash" from Manila and neighboring cities that used Pier 18 as a temporary dump from January 2003 to March 2003, when Metro Manila had a garbage crisis.

WPD chief overstaying at his post

CHIEF Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Western Police District (WPD) director, retained powerful 11 officials-turn-bad-cops posts he alleged by being linked to the kidnapping and extortion activities of former NBI agent Marlo Soriano.

Two of the officials were Supt. Marcelino Bolivar and Insp. Cesar Ili of Station 9.

Bolivar had been featured at least twice in my public service program, "Sumbong mo kay Tol." for abusive conduct.

According to my sources, Bolivar is the bar-hunter/boy of Bulaong. both graduated from the same school, the Philippine Military Academy (PMA).

Bolivar's cabinet could use former or perhaps a supposed defector from higher-ups for the cops to be sacked.

Nothing will come out of the investigation into the role of Supt. Jinky with Soriano if those conducting the probe are from

ON TARGET
Rommel Tadio

the WPD, according to my sources there.

The investigation should be handled by either the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) or the national headquarters at Camp Crame.

* * *

By the way, there are whispers among the cooks about the corrupt activities of some WPD officials.

One official who was allegedly involved in "holdup"—a police term—in his/her shakedown of a crime suspect—was killed by unidentified persons last year.

The official and his men arrested a young lad for drug possession. The cops did not immediately file a case against the boy, according to my sources at the WPD.

These sources said the cops demanded P10 million from the boy's father, a shipping magnate.

After negotiations between the cops and the boy's father failed, the cops filed a case against the boy with the Manila prosecutor's office, according to my sources.

The boy was released later because the case was only for drug possession. But several days after the boy was released, he was again arrested by the same cops who made the failed negotiations with the father.

The boy was found dead in dumpsite days later.

Stirring alibi, the police officer, who led the team that arrested the boy, was ambushed and killed.

His eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

Abu guest at Rotary meet

GEN. EDDIE L. Abu, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines will be the guest of honor and speaker at the meeting morning of around 60 Rotary clubs in Quezon City tonight at Tipsoul Hall, Officers Club, Camp Aguinaldo. The Rotary Club of Quezon, headed by President Philip Estrano, is host of the meeting.

Abu will talk on the issue of national security on a on the global threat of terrorism, corruption in the AFP and the reforms he had initiated. District 3780 District Governor George L. Steward will deliver a brief message. RC Manning President Soriano will preside over the welcome address, with past President Monty Isla as night chair.

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
NPC-MMSD-2005-003

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC)-MMSD of NPC invites interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following projects:

Schedule	Date/Time	Venue	Price
Issuance of Bid Documents	Feb. 7, 2005		
Pre-bid Conference	Feb. 17, 2005		
Submission and Opening of Bids	Feb. 28, 2005		

Bidders are prequalified only for Projects and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Materials Management Division, Finance Department, NPC Head Office, Quezon City. Mr. [illegible] Chief, Bids and Awards Committee

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BASICS OF MARKETING A TO Z

March 2, 3 & 4, 2005
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Quad Room Metro Makati

This seminar helps clear the confusions and jumbles in marketing. Thus, it aims to give marketing executives the essential concepts and tools needed to design exceptional marketing programs and effectively function as marketing practitioners.

Target Participants
This seminar is specifically designed for those who may already be doing a marketing management function but whose academic preparation is non-marketing. They can be frontline, mid- and upper-level management of trade management, sales, customer relations, advertising, promotions, media and public relations.

Seminar Objectives
At the end of this seminar, or **Basics of Marketing A to Z**, participants will know the key marketing concepts like the basics and principles of marketing, 4P's (product, place, price and promotion), consumer behavior and target marketing.

Methodology
Lectures, workshops, and in-class application projects make specific to the participants. Name participants can immediately apply new concepts and skills. Resource speakers are multi-awarded marketing practitioners who will share their experiences and insights about the Basics of Marketing.

SEMINAR PROGRAM

Day 1 – March 2, 2005 (Wednesday)
8:00 AM – Registration – 9:00 – 9:30 AM
Basic Business and Marketing concepts
Seminar Chair: Ms. Marivic de los Reyes
Professor
San Beda College

Session 1 – 9:30 – 12:00 noon
The Enigma of Marketing Mix in Today's Business Environment
Speaker: Ms. Marivic de los Reyes
Professor
San Beda College

Session 2 – 1:45-5:00 pm
Data Consumer Analysis Affects Business Strategy
Speaker: Mr. Ricardo de Vera
President
Fit Print Direct Marketing

Session 3 – 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Crucial Areas in Market Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning
Speaker: Ms. Ma. Teresa V. Sargento
Senior Executive Officer
Universal Bank

Day 2 – March 3, 2005 (Thursday)
Late Lip Session – 7:00 – 7:30 pm

Session 4 – 8:45 – 12:00 pm
Mapping Our Winning Strategies for Tougher Times
Speaker: Ms. Violet Frondoso
Assistant Vice President
International Exchange Bank

[illegible] – 1:00 – 5:00 pm

Day 3 – March 4, 2005 (Friday)
Late Lip Session – 7:00 – 7:30 pm

Session 5 – 7:30 – 12:00 pm
Connecting with your Consumers through Effective Communication
Speaker: Mr. ANTONIO S. SENTERO
Managing Director
Leo Burnett

PRESENTATION OF PARTICIPANTS – 1:45 – 5:30 pm
*speaker to be confirmed

METRO

Text or your feedback [illegible] Editor Boots C. Dipasupil ■ Assistant Editor Carmen S. Rilles

C5 Road now open to motorists

By Margaux C. Ortiz

WITH THE inauguration yesterday of a new flyover on C5 Road, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) hopes to improve the traffic flow on Edsa by reducing the number of vehicles plying the main thoroughfare.

"Motorists on Edsa can now use C5 without any hassle," MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Bergolis Diaz said at the launch.

The C5-Edsa Interim Access Enhancement Revenue Interchange Project took three years to complete.

Vergel de Dios said that during the project's construction, the traffic yielded to the northbound lane had reached Eastwood and Quezon Liber thoughfare on the northbound lane.

"Now, motorists would be encouraged to take C5 and use the flyover from Ugong to Kamputan," the Traffic chief said.

The 1925-million project is a cloverleaf interchange that involved the construction of a 272-meter long, four-lane flyover connecting E. Rodriguez and Boni Serrano Avenues, and a 1,100-meter long, four-lane tunnel connecting Boni Serrano and Kalayaan Avenues.

The project is also complemented by service roads along E. Rodriguez, Kamputan Avenue, and Boni Serrano Avenue; the widening of Kamputan from the intersection until St. Ignatius Subdivision; and landscaping work.

Earlier, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) had encountered problems on road right-of-way acquisition and limited successes during the project's construction.

Considered the missing link in the C5 Road network, the interchange project was completed on Jan. 7.

DPWH officials said the project is expected to improve the traffic situation in the area, enhance the overall traffic distribution in Metro Manila, and shorten the travel time of people, goods and services.

Local government units like Quezon City, Marikina, Pasig, Taguig, Makati, Muntinlupa and Pateros could anticipate additional sources of revenue and funds from new investments, and an increase in land value and property taxes as the project's immediate vicinity rehabilitated.

Drivers irked by long lines to get TVRs

TRANSPORT operators may have gotten their way with the recent issuance of a temporary restraining order against three of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority's traffic schemes, but their drivers are grumbling.

Forming a long line at the agency's renewing redemption center in Makati City, the drivers of different public utility vehicles yesterday complained about the revival of the Traffic Violation Receipt (TVR) scheme.

More convenient

"We prefer the Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) scheme because it is more convenient for us," bus driver James Aguinaldo (not his real name) told reporters in an interview outside the TVR redemption center.

Aguinaldo, who had lined up for about an hour to redeem his license, said the MTT scheme enabled him to easily pay his fines to any metrobank branch in between bus stops, without having his license confiscated by the traffic enforcer.

"With the MTT, I could even ask other people to pay the fine for me at the bank," he said.

The TVR scheme, however, forced Aguinaldo to redeem his license even if it was his day off.

Allies

The bus driver said he is a member of the Integrated Metro Bus Operators Association (Imboa), one of the transport groups that filed a complaint against the MMDA, MTT, No Contact Traffic Apprehension (NCTA) and the Organized Bus Route (OBR).

Jeepney driver Albert Malabanan said delivery van driver Elmo Baquiro agreed with Aguinaldo, saying the revival of the old scheme had prevented them from playing their routes and earning extra income.

Judge Cesar Sarmiento, of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148, had earlier issued a 20-day TRO on the three MMDA traffic-ulletins order.

The restraining order was in response to a petition by nine transport groups which claimed that the implementation of the schemes "amounted to their constitutional right to due process, "which necessarily includes their right to life."

In favor of TRO

Other groups that favored the TRO were the Pinagsamang Samahang mga Tsuper-Operators Nationwide (Pistop), Philippine Confederation of Drivers and Operators Alliance of Concerned Transport Operators (PCDO ACTO), Alliance of Transport Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (Atodap), Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association (Fejodap), Bukal Jeepney Operator and Driver Association (BJODA), North East Manila Bayleyan-ista Group Working and Provincial Bus Operators Association of the Philippines (PBOAP).

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, on the other hand, said he "commiserated with the drivers' suffering."

"We had to stop our traffic schemes in deference to the court, and at the expense of our economy," he added. Margaux C. Ortiz

Makati tops tax collection drive in Metro

THE COUNTRY's richest city, which houses the biggest businesses and commercial centers, is also the biggest tax earner in Metro Manila.

Makati City posted around P6.6 billion in total tax collections for 2006, according to a report from the city treasury office.

A large chunk of this amount came from business licenses collections, which contributed some P2 billion, P5 billion came from real property taxes.

"The increase in our collection makes us more financially stable and more capable to deliver better services to our residents and clients," Mabati Mayor Jejomar Binay said in a statement yesterday.

The mayor's financial capital will allocate the bigger bulk of their budget to education and health, said Makati Information and Community Relations head Jovy Salgado.

"We are putting up six new school buildings this year, and the construction of the Makati Central Police station and an Olympic-size swimming pool in JP Rizal Extension is also in the works," he added.

Binay[illegible] tax payment centers were recently put up in 33 barangays as part of the city's drive to increase its revenues. Brina C. Pinlac

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Molavidez

Jewels eye breakthrough victory

WELCOME? Marvin Ortigoza and Leo Najorda grapple for the ball.

AARC TERRY J. ALBANO (Manila Bulletin)

AFTER moving within a win of the title in the PBL Open Championship last Saturday, the Mandaluyong Jewels decided to temper their excitement.

"We just need one more win but this doesn't mean the series is over," said Alex Compton, who will try to lead the Jewels to their first crown against the Welcoat Paintmasters in Game 4 of the championship series at 3:30 p.m. today at the Makati Coliseum.

"Welcoat is capable of coming back," said coach Robert Garcia, whose Jewels took a commanding 2-1 lead after a 77-67 Game 3 victory. "They're a very strong team and I have a lot of respect for their coaching staff. But if they are more confident, they'll also want to finish it in Game 4. So we're going all out."

"The momentum is on our side so it's not a question of how we could sustain it," added Baxter. "It's a history-making mission for us as we're really motivated to win this series."

The Paintmasters, though, are similarly motivated in forging a winner-take-all showdown on Thursday.

"There will be a game on Thursday," vowed Welcoat coach Lolo Garcia. "We are positive about it and the boys are actually asking us to shorten the practices."

In fact, Garcia pointed out that his Paintmasters are very capable of staging a comeback.

Garcia noted that in the semifinals, fourth-seed Welcoat stunned league-leader Magnolia-PSD twice after losing Game 1 of the playoff series. Thus the young coach felt there's no reason they can't repeat the feat to bag the champ. multiplayers.

Compton has been getting the Paintmasters a big headache. The former shooting guard has been carrying the load for the Jewels in the finals as early as the second quarter. He finished with 18 points, 11 rebounds and five assists.

Compton also finally got help from Joe Lino Aldrado who found his scoring touch after two forgettable performances. The league's Most Valuable Player shot 11 points and grabbed 11 rebounds in Game 3.

Welcoat, meanwhile, will again lean on top scorer Anthony Washington and reserves Clemart Tolentino and Marvin Ortigoza.

However, Garcia added that his team must have little room for error. Welcoat averaged 20.7 turnovers, while the Jewels tallied only 15.

"We have to maintain our turnovers," hoted Garcia. "If we can't, multiforgone knew (we'll have a hard time."

Jaumilet M. Pajes

Ginebra comes up short in key stretch

By Jude Madera

TANQUINCIEN

BOY Tanquincien has again taken on full responsibility for Barangay Ginebra's Game 4 duel up against the Talk 'N' Text Phone Pals.

But Kelvin Abueva showed the Kings self-destructed in a decisive stretch of Sunday's game, committing a handful of errors, blowing freethrows and missing baskets that silenced the Phone Pals in the Grand Slam of the Philippine Cup best-of-seven championship series at 2-2.

"Those were unforgiving mistakes but still, I could have done something about it. Coaches are forced to make decisions based on current circumstances," said Tanquincien.

Mark Caguioa fanned a couple of three-pointers, Rodney Santos blew a mid-range jumper and Erik Meik was assessed a three-second violation aside from missing all his four freethrows in the final minutes.

All told, the Kings missed 11 of 25 freethrows while the three-second violations of this conference's MVP topped the team's 20 turnovers overall.

"Hopefully, we could find a solution. It all boiled down to us making fired and capitalizing outs of the ball," said Tanquincien, whose Kings took an early 2-1 series lead.

Still, Tanquincien praised the Kings for a satisfactory job, especially Caguioa, who exploded for 40 points following a lethargic showing in Game 3.

"He (Caguioa) played a hell of a game and I'm happy with the way the team played," said Tanquincien. "Again, it's not the points. I could have made more quick adjustments but I did not."

With the series reduced to a best-of-three affair, Tanquincien believes endgame execution and maturity would be critical for both teams.

"Nothing's going to be easy from now until the end," said Tanquincien.

"But one thing's for sure, every time people question us or start doubting us, that's the time we play our best."

Meanwhile, the Court of Appeals has ordered Governor Joey Concepcion and other officials to answer four procedural infractions in his petition to overturn a Justice department finding that he linked his Filipinos citizenship.

Hasp, who has long left the country, has been given 30 days to answer the subpoenas under the pain of dismissal of his petition.

The court said the petition lacked a verified statement on material dates, it was not served personally to the respondents, the attachments were not certified true copies and the unsigned line of the Philippines official excerpt number of his lawyer "appeared to be outdated." With a report from Philip Ednan

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New venues for 4 more SEAG events

By Mars Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINE Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee yesterday took drastic measures to cut down the number of sports disciplines out of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and Philsports in Pasig which need to undergo rehabilitation prior for SEA.

In reaction to the decision made regarding the P500-million rehabilitation cost of facilities damaged and destroyed by the Philippine Sports Commission, Phisoc officials said the committee has decided to take table tennis, gymnastics, badminton and wrestling out of the RMSC and Philsports.

Of the four, only gymnastics, originally set at Ninoy Aquino Stadium, has found a new site, the World Trade Center along Roxas Boulevard. Badminton, supposedly slated at Philsports, is reportedly transferring to an unspecified venue in Mandaluyong.

Table tennis and wrestling, earlier slated at Philsports and Rizal Multi-Purpose Hall, respectively, are still looking for new venues in an attempt to avoid multimillion construction jobs at the PSC-supervised facilities.

"They want to save money on the construction or repairs," said Dindo Escosa, the Philsoc spokesperson.

The repair and rehabilitation of venues is expected to cost P500 million, but Congress has allotted the Philippine Sports Commission only P350 million for the projects.

Escosa added that the Philsoc is also expected to enter into an agreement with owners of private venues to be used for the SEA Games to come up with a uniform policy on all privately owned venues in Metro Manila, Subic, Bataan and Cebu City.

The move came on the heels of reports that P80 million will be needed to repair the Rizal track and field stadium, P45 million for the PSC and P5 million for the Tennis Center. The amount does not include the cost of repairs for the Rizal Multi-Purpose and the Philsports.

Meanwhile, Philsoc vice chair and Philippine Olympic Committee president Peping Cojuangco and POC first vice president and Philsoc official Step Romero Numerella will meet with prospective sponsors tomorrow to formalize their partnership for the SEA Games.

"We are meeting some big companies on Wednesday," said Numerella after the Philsoc meeting held at Cojuangco's office in Makati.

PACQUIAO: Best division since comeback

Pacquiao says finances safe with new group

RINGSIDE Ring Magazine bantamweight king Manny Pacquiao yesterday announced he has "made the best decision in his career" in booking up with New York-based manager Shelly Finkel.

Saying he has never been happier in his pro boxing life, Pacquiao said the change of handlers has brought him peace of mind as he prepares for the 12-round bout with lifetime legend Erik Morales on March 10 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

In a long-distance interview with Mike Jarrapat over GMR, Pacquiao said he feels comfortable with his new team, made up of Finkel and lawyers Keith Davidson and Nicholas Khan.

Pacquiao added he was reassured by his new management of better accounting of his finances, and that he would be given a chance to personally see to it that everybody in the team gets his share of the pie after each fight.

For the first time, the Filipino boxing star said he would be personally handing out the respective shares to his posse for his victory rematch, and confirming coach.

Pacquiao said he expects to get a fair share of the pay-per-view and other television royalties, and that a transparent management team should deal with that.

"I have full trust in my new management team because I know they have the experience and reputation to make things work," said Pacquiao, as quoted by US-based journalist Mitchell Campos yesterday.

Pacquiao, who has transformed his division since his last fight, is expected to earn a cool $2 million for the rematch with Morales.

Before signing with Finkel, Pacquiao was represented by Top Rank Inc. chief Bob Arum, Dan de Jesus and Jesse Garcia.

Personal trainer and boyhood buddy Buboy Fernandez said that all things are in order at the camp as he got back the proper timing to his punches, and everything is expected to fall into their right places.

Ambet Laguardia, Contributor

Arroyo, FVR banner Celebrities Tourney cast today at Riviera

TOP personalities in business, government and sports will be in attendance when the Celebrity Tournament of the Manuel Miranda Pro-Am is held today at Riviera's Langer course in Silang, Cavite.

First Gentleman Mike Arroyo is expected to grace the occasion, but he's a father of the tournament host and has schedule permitting—a participant in the event where 40 of the country's top pro-am stars are vying for.

The 18-hole event limit champs style will precede the WGD-sanctioned Isuzu Manila Pro-Am set Feb. 9-12, with a whopping P1.2 million purse distributed to the Top 10 finishers among a field of 114 teams.

Today's Celebrity Tournament will award cash, merchandise and trophies to the winning foursome of the all-star, powerful Team Mr. Lee, the lone-to-one pick at No. 6.

Also expected to play today are former President Ramos, MWP president Bienvenido Gupan, Riviera president Comm. Danny Parayno (ret.), PBC GK Branch Romanos, Toyota Philippines' Ernesto Ilda and WGDP chair Rod Ochoa (ret.).

They will be joined among 40 of the country's pro-led by Mars Pizzo, Antonio Lascuña and former Philippine Open champion Robert Rodriguez in the tournament support of Sr. Boss, Epson, Brother Office, Canon, Olympus, Pfizer, McGeek, Swiss-Maxx, Pagasa Mineral Water, DBL/APPM Express, PSC, Bravo Golf and Russell Group.

Among those taking part are Takayuki Kawakami, president of Brother International; Tomoyuki Endo, president of Philippine Toyota Enterprises Inc. and Hiroshi Asano, EVP, Philippine Piston Ballad Inc.

"Finally, we are all go," said Gilbo Corpuz, the owner Bert Bebot, who revived the revered Pro-Am in 2000 in partnership with Construction Pioneers. "We will surely have some kind of competition out there, though, we will have fun in the sun."

ARROYO

RAMOS

BRAVO

The Riviera Manila Pro-Am will blast off tomorrow morning Saturday with a total purse of P1.5-million going to the Top 30 finishers.

Gerard Custodio and JK Tangalin will defend their crown as they share the newly-minted two-day prize added by Reyes and Mayi Batalla. The one-and-two division of Riviera Hillsides Business Technologies Corporation of Japan.

Custodio and Tangalin beat Raul Ramirez and Marvin Dumandan in the sudden-death playoff, with Ramirez missing a four-footer to extend the battle.

SPORTSWATCH

Jaro keeps RP junior fly title

SOMBY Boy Antonette secured his Philippine junior flyweight title Sunday by knocking out Jaro's Jerry Jaro in the second round of a scheduled 12-rounder at the San Carlos City Multipurpose. The well-conditioned Jaro used flashier inflow versus Antonette in the referee stopped the two-sided fight versus nineteen until 54 seconds of the second round. Jaro was caught throwing by the referee Rodolfo Gonzalez, who immediately stopped the fight. Antonette, Mikaela, also improved his fight with unbeaten Rolando Mendoza. Jaro used to dominate over Antonette without fail standing. In the third rematch without Head Evangelista stopped promoters and Gonzalez by technical knockout at the end of the fourth round. In other bouts, Jigan Salvagni TKO'd Jayson Sena at 1:36 of the fourth round; Jaro Jaro won a unanimous 4-0 call over Rolando Abrigo; decisioned Omar Hamamoto; and Rodolfo Dalisay stopped Jerry Dagang at 2:21 of the fourth.

Edwin Lagumbay, Contributor

Gobi's Indian luc arriving Thursday

DOUBLOO Nepal - Gobi, the World Boxing Council's No. 8 bantamweight contender, begins training for his February 24 fight with Indian Ajay Singh in a 10-round bout capping a three-boxing show at the Royal Bhaktapur Hotel in Durbar Sq. Promoters who fought Rolando Lubico on June 12, 2000 in Indonesia is responsible for more Thursday during public presentation Prem Bahadur Gahti has announced that Gobi will be fighting Singh in the Nepalese capital. Gobi, who is originally from Philippines' Davao, is currently training at the gym of Philippine Wilfredo "Boboy" Ramos and PBC commentator Luis Montenegro. Boxing fans can follow Gobi's training camp on Philippine Channel 7 on Saturday at 10:30 a.m. Gobi is also scheduled to appear on the

NEW DYNASTY

Patriots retain Super Bowl

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—After ruling their third Super Bowl title in four years, the New England Patriots left no doubt that they are among the greatest franchises football has ever seen.

Tom Brady matched Dallas in the early frames to capture three crowns in four seasons and stretched their playoff win streak to a record nine games, dominating their foe in a manner few might have expected.

"It was definitely no dominance."

PATRIOTS: Richard Seymour celebrates with the Vince Lombardi Trophy. AP

Patriots safety Rodney Harrison said. "You want to talk about the other teams like Dallas? Everyone put me in that category? Now we've got to do something to earn the right to be put in that category."

Patriots offensive coordinator Charlie Weis, who is leaving to coach the University of Notre Dame, has adopted the team's unpublicized motto heralding the word "dynasty." But two others fit.

"We've never used that word, but there out of four ain't bad," Weis said. "It's easier to steal the screen like that. There's nothing better than Tom's quarterback rating over 7 (and ten). I'm delighted for this team. I would like to see them win a nd win and win," Mike Vrabel, a linebacker who switched to offense to goal-line situations, caught a two-yard touchdown pass from Brady, his fifth touchdown in as many postseason. We cannot see this happen reign coming to an end any time soon.

"I don't think we're done," Vrabel said. "These guys have got a lot of football left in them."

No one realizes that any more than Eagles quarterback Donovan McNabb, who was intercepted four times, the last by Ellerbe with nine seconds remaining to seal the New England triumph.

"What they have done the last four years has been phenomenal," McNabb said. "Your Brady and the Patriots have done a great job of playing together." Patriots coach Bill Belichick boasted the all-time regular-season NFL playoff coach, surpassing Giants Hall legend Vince Lombardi in stretching his mark to 19-1. But in tribute to his former boss at all turns sources.

"We don't look at it that way," Belichick said. "I'll leave the comparisons and historical perspectives to somebody else." Brady adopted the same course, a shy grin betraying his joy. He enjoyed surrounding his team.

"You guys all want me to say it but I'm not going to say it," Brady said. "I don't think we ever approached it as three out of four years. We've really only approached anything. That's not our style.

"We really are a team. In four seasons I've never had a season complaint. Guys are getting the ball. I've never had a running back complain about not getting enough carries.

"It's not so much for us about what we have accomplished as the grand scheme of things. You can lose touch every day. You take one at a time and it makes them tough they are." Patriots guard Joe Andruzzi said. He feels working men sport is part of why they call it so.

"We've already had guys catch a couple hard-fo pads that come to work," he said. "A lot of people don't give us respect. This is an... believable. Nobody could imagine this." Mike you don't have to tell me. I've come the BOE team to visit three Super Bowls in a row. But these Patriots worry about him when it comes.

"I just know we're champions now," Andruzzi said. "We've won and I'm going to enjoy it." AP

MVP Deion Branch receives AP

Ex-presidents make plea for tsunami aid

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Former United States presidents Bill Clinton and George Bush appeared at Super Bowl 39 here Sunday, making an appeal for relief contributions to aid victims of the Asian tsunami disaster.

"What we're trying to do is come to the aid of people who need it in a well-spent," Clinton said. "The effects not only the rest of the world but our children's lives too."

Democrat Clinton defeated Republican incumbent Bush in the Florida state in November's election. Both the father of current US President George W. Bush, to the 1992 US presidential election. But the rivals have united to help raise money for victims of the disaster.

"We now that as very important work," Bush said. "This visit could be public. This is more important... This is about saving lives."

The two former presidents were appointed by current President Bush to head up private fundraising for relief efforts in the wake of the Dec. 26 tsunamis.

They appeared in the on-field pre-game ceremonies, which also saw paid tribute to Ronald Reagan, who died on Saturday. Their televised speech on the live television network's pre-game show broadcast from the venue.

Clinton was named by current President Bush as a UN envoy to lead private money and clothes pay between an estimated 12 million Indian subcontinent and the six million dollars in global relief issues pledges.

"They want me to make sure the long-term recovery effort is successful," Clinton said. "They want me to go list on those governments for the rest of this year, to and try to prevent future disasters if we can." AFP

Owens sure Eagles will be back

PATRIOTS head coach Bill Belichick is doused after the Patriots beat the Eagles. AP

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Terrell Owens surely made it onto the field for the Super Bowl, but the Philadelphia receiver who defied doctor's orders to play already guarantees he will be Eagles will be back.

Playing just 6 1/2 weeks after suffering a broken left leg and ankle, Owens caught nine passes for 122 yards for the Eagles here Sunday six them 24-21 loss to New England in the Super Bowl. Owens caught nine passes for 122 yards.

"I feel fine," Owens said. "I just feel bad we lost the game. We lost to a good team. Hey, we'll be back. We will. We will be back on this stage."

Blasting defenders for receptions of 36 and 30 yards, Owens turned heroic that he was able to be more than a decoy, making a major contribution to spinning attack that rolled up 317 yards.

"He played a heck of a game, played his heart out and made some jaw receptions," Eagles coach Andy Reid said. "He took more snaps than I thought he would and had a great effort." Owens made 77 catches for 1,200 yards and 14 touchdowns in 12 games this season before his injury and dubbed the catch for starting against the Patriots.

"It didn't matter if I started. I knew I was going on the field, and I was going to be ready," Owens said. "I played as many plays as I could. Coach allowed me to get on the field and called my number. That don't get rated." The Eagles-Patriots matchup is just three seasons in the playoffs and one triumph shy of reaching the Super Bowl. Making it to the big game this time was a breakthrough, and quarterback Donovan McNabb is confident it's not the last.

"We lost in the conference championship game. We came back," McNabb said. "We lost to the Super Bowl. We will be back. He came to close. I'm going to come out with my head high. I think it has been a wonderful year.

"I'll bet you everyone here on the stage of their seats. We would have won." The 6th-ranked Issued four turnovers, two of them McNabb interceptions in the fourth quarter. But even New England defensive had to respect Owens' efforts.

"It's incredible for that guy to break his leg and come off that injury as early as he did," fourtime cornerback Asante Samuel said. "To perform the way he did is a credit to him. I have a great deal of respect for that man." T.O. played well," McNabb added. "He played really, really well." AP

Mickelson wins FBR Open by 5

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz.—Despite shots that curled into the desert and in the water, Phil Mickelson is a winner again, on a course that still feels like Arnie.

Mickelson won the FBR Open by five strokes on Sunday, the largest margin of victory so far for 34 PGA Tour events.

Mickelson's adventures off the fairway were offset by ball-striking that had to beat Tiger Woods's final round 5-under 65. He never led by fewer than three strokes on Sunday, then capped his round with a 20-foot birdie putt from the fringe on the 18th to be the solid classic of the friendly day.

MICKELSON AP

Mickelson finished at 17-under 267 on the Tournament Players Club course. Scott McCarron and Scott Verplank were second. He tied for second at 272. AP

Sixers victory sparks early celebration

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Allen Iverson scored 28 points to lead the 76ers to a 109-104 home win over the Los Angeles Clippers on Sunday, as the city of Philadelphia prepared for even bigger success in Super Bowl XXXIX.

With the Eagles facing the New England Patriots in the NFL title game later on Sunday, the 76ers provided a winning start to the day to host get in the mood early cheering "Eagles, Eagles," Iverson made sure supporters would go home happy, the Sixers leading wire taking control with the contest tied at 104-104, making a three pointer and then sinking two free throws to seal the victory.

Kyle Korver posted 16 points and Andre Iguodala added 15 as the 76ers' cause.

In Minneapolis, Joel Przybz poured in 32 points to lead The Boston Celtics past the Timberwolves, 103-100, to ensure New England spoiled fans also enjoyed a winning start to Super Bowl Sunday.

Gary Payton had 23 points and Ricky Davis added 21 as the Celtics posted their third straight win.

League MVP Kevin Garnett and Wildcard Shoo-Kandi each had 21 but could not keep the slumping Timberwolves from shooting Our fifth consecutive defeat.

In Toronto, Dallas got double figure efforts from seven players, led by a 20 point, 11 rebound performance from Dirk Nowitzki as the Mavericks thumped the Raptors, 123-113. AP

COMPLETE RESULTS: Dallas 123, Toronto 113; Philadelphia 109, LA Clippers 104; Boston 103, Minnesota 100; Memphis 100, Golden State 97; Seattle 110, Phoenix 102; Utah 102, Portland 92. AP

Barako manager named PFF vice president

PHILIPPINE Football Federation president Johnny Romualdez recently announced that Tony Chua, team manager of the Red Bull Barako basketball team and a former football player, has been appointed vice president of the PFF and chair of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games Men and Women's Football Tournament (men and women).

In a meeting with godfathers selected by the Pasi Grafteam Presidential, Jack Sindegan for women's football and Dr.Dale Bermudez for men's football, Chua briefly discussed some of his plans for the national teams in preparation for the South-east Asian Games.

Chua, 52 year-old executive of Petrobras this betting, will make sure the training program submitted by the coaches of the Southeast Asian Games teams is feasible and implementable.

Chua played for the Letran team between and those for the famed Lions team in the commercial leagues in the '70s. He became a coach in the national team in 1987-88 and was the general secretary of the National Capital Region from 1986 to 1987.

CHUA

Gaudio yanks crown away from Gonzalez

VINA DEL MAR, Chile—French Open champion Gaston Gaudio overcame a partisan crowd to be beat Chile's Fernando Gonzalez to win the Bellsouth Open ATP tournament on Sunday.

Gonzalez, Olympic gold medalist in the men's doubles last year and defending champion here, scored four match point in the 8-

GAUDIO reacts after his final winning serve Chile's Fernando Gonzalez. AP

Sharapova to miss Tokyo for a year

TOKYO—Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova can't wait to be back in Tokyo, where she won her first professional title four WTA titles and this weekend was crowned at the Pan Pacific Open.

But success has caught up with her and it will be at least one year before the skyrocketing Russian may be is eligible to play again in her favorite city.

"I just seem to bring up my level when I play here, I don't know what it is, but I'm always determined," said Sharapova after winning the Pan Pacific Open by beating world #2 number one Lindsay Davenport, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (7/5), Sunday.

"I've such great memories here. When I'm coming back, I feel inspired to win and here are so interesting to me. They definitely encourage you as well.

"I remember winning my first title when I was 14 years old in Toyama, and here I won a Tier 1 as the professional tour, so without you I'm music, I wouldn't have been here. I can't wait to be back."

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TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2005 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

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Rev-A at 4 Tent
PENTIUM
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1 Radio Vi
Cabinet, E.C.

BIR, Customs exceed January targets

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE BUREAUS of Internal Revenue and of Customs exceeded their tax collection goals in January, giving a positive assessment for the government to achieve a better fiscal position this year.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said preliminary figures showed that the revenue agencies had surpassed by a slight margin its P90.9-billion target for the month. The official figure, which will be released next week, are still incomplete upon completion of the BIR's computation.

Initial calculations showed that the BIR has already collected P62 billion, and Bureau Deputy Commissioner Rex Ebarsabal. The amount is as big the highest collection for the usually slow month of January in the BIR's history.

She said ongoing efforts to improve revenue collection, such as improvements in the auditing system and the "run mapping," contributed to a higher-than-target collection for January.

Not stopping to the progress under which the BIR sends revenue personnel to the field to check on the tax compliance of commercial establishments, such as those located in malls and business districts.

The BIR, which accounts for more than 60 percent of the national government's total revenues, is tasked to collect P456.1 billion this year, or 15 percent higher than the P479 billion it collected in 2004.

The government is handing large-ly on the BIR and the Customs to raise more revenues to help achieve its medium-term goal of wiping out the budget deficit, which last year totaled P136.1 billion.

For the BOC's part, Customs Commissioner George Jimon report-ed that his office also surpassed its collection target by P300 million. The BOC's statistics department said in duty collections for the month reached P10.09 billion as against the target of P9.782 billion.

The BOC was earlier tasked to collect P146.64 billion for 2005, but the Department of Finance, its head agency, is expected to raise the figure to more than P158 billion. The government wants to raise the BOC's revenue target considering that it found no diffi-culty meeting its target last year.

For the whole of 2004, the BOC, the second biggest revenue contributor to the government among all agencies, collected P122 billion. This was P7.68 billion more than its target of P114.2 bil-lion. The BOC attributed its col-lection performance last year to several factors, such as its cost-containment efforts and the de-precision of the peso. Strength-ening of the dollar against the pe-so makes the BOC collect higher amounts of import duties.

The BOC said it has also strength-ened its anti-smuggling drive.

The BOC said in a statement that it has seized multi-million pe-so worth of smuggled items.

Customs Deputy Commission-er Reynaldo Nicdao reported that the bureau was able to detect P1.1 million worth of cellular phones shipped to the Manila Interna-tional Container Port from Singa-pore and consigned to Libra Trad-

Peso hits 19-month high of 54.52:$1

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO yesterday hit a 19-month high of 54.52 against the US dollar before closing at 54.57, its further ascent tempered only by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' dollar purchases.

Foreign exchange traders said the BSP in a bid to temper the sharp appreciation of the local currency, had been snapping up the greenback at the spot foreign exchange market.

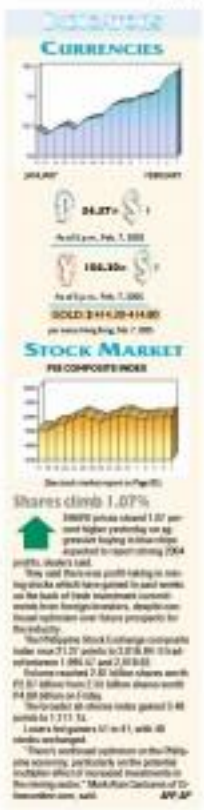
"They (BSP traders) are the only ones buying in the market," one trader said. "The BSP is trying its best to smoothen the depreciation."

The closing of 54.57 to the dollar yesterday represented a gain of 11 centavos from Friday's 54.68. It was also the best currency closing Trends since Oct. 13, 2000.

Some $364.1 million changed hands at the Philippine Dealing System.

The peso opened at 54.62 and hit as intra-day low of 54.63 before narrowing in rally.

Other traders said liquidity in the market was further boosted by some $56 million in offshore portfolio inflow which came in last Friday for the stock rights offering of real estate firm Dominion Mining Corp.



Shares climb 1.07%

[illegible] prices closed 1.07 percent higher yesterday on aggressive buying in blue chips expected to report strong 2004 profits, dealers said.

They said there was profit taking in mid-buying stocks which have gained in past weeks on the back of trade investment commitments from foreign investors, despite continued optimism over future prospects for the industry.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 21.29 points to 2,018.86. It had advancers 1 (66.67 and 2 (33.33).

Volume reached 2.32 billion shares worth P3.67 billion from 2.16 billion shares worth P4.09 billion on Friday.

The broader all-shares index gained 3.48 points to 1,213.34.

Losers led gainers 67 to 43, with 48 stocks unchanged.

"There's continued optimism on the Philippine economy, particularly on the potential multiplier effect of increased investments in the mining sector," Mark Alan Cardenas of Sterne[illegible] said.

AFP, AP

Globe seen to incur ₱5B in losses

But new standards shift won't hit telco's bottomline, execs say

By Clarissa S. Bedro

GLOBE Telecom Inc. has said that losses related to the year's adoption of new international accounting standards, including adjustments pertaining to foreign exchange, would not affect the company's profitability.

Globe's chief financial officer Emilio Bonifacio stressed that the entire amount would be charged to retained earnings, and thus, should not affect the company's profitability.

Of the estimated ₱5 billion the second-ranking phone giant would incur due to new global standards of accounting, ₱2.5 billion are related to foreign exchange, accounting for the losses on currency.

The rest, said Gonzalez, pertained to other items. Among these are accounting of financial instruments including derivatives, investment property, shares-based payments, non-current assets held for sale, investment properties, plant and equipment, related party disclosures, investments in associates and interests and joint ventures, among others.

"The ₱5 billion which we would charge to retained earnings is P&L (Profit-and-Loss Statement) neutral," assured the company's financial executive. "This would not affect our bottomline."

Of the new accounting benchmarks, the two items on foreign exchange are considered the most important as it would require companies to be more transparent in their dollar transactions.

The new standard requires companies to book any foreign exchange losses on transactions on the year these were incurred and not later. It also required that outstanding loans on foreign exchange transactions be made transparent.

Globe has ₱3.66 billion of debts that mature in 2006 and ₱3.66 billion in 2006. The company said it has enough money on hand to settle its debts even as 2004 posts growth of 9.7 percent was the slowest in 6 years.

The joint venture of Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications Ltd. earned ₱13.1 billion in 2004 against ₱26.3 billion in 2003. But the company assured it had enough free cash to keep on expanding the network and to pay its shareholders a huge windfall.

Globe is spending ₱17 billion mainly for network roll-out this year. It had also set aside ₱8 billion to buy back a share for every 15 shares held by its owners.

The bulk, 89 percent of Globe's debts, is foreign denominated. The easy and forward contracts have effectively reduced Globe's foreign debts to about 55 percent.

The company said long-term debt slapped to ₱52 billion last year from ₱36 billion in 2003. Of the total, ₱9 billion are falling due this year, ₱20 billion spread out between 2006 and 2008 and the remaining ₱43 billion due in 2009.

Till debt do us far

BREAKTIME

Quevedo X Ramos III

LET'S say you are one of the millions who continue to watch, spending time in the house on the road each day—time which you can use to engage in "chitlins" instead.

You also probably notice that, lately, it doesn't take much—say the defeat of the Gordon-San Miguel-Kings basketball team or the PBA finals—for people to start killing each other.

If people are getting a lot more hot-headed than usual, it may have something to do with the road rage phenomenon called DPWH.

The department has closed down four after major four interchanges after major thoroughfares all over Metro Manila for ... well, road repair.

It seems that the DPWH is trying to make up for lost opportunity in the lucrative road repair business. The department hasn't had any repair last year.

Well, it was an election year, and this new administration of Gloriarita had better save for public funds other than wasting it on infrastructure.

For example, it could—and in fact is did—spend a lot of money on the political campaign of Gloriarita and her closest candidates like Bong and Lito.

* * *

ANYWAY, the recent rash of the DPWH to repair some roads is a most welcome sight to the people of Metro Manila. At least things are finally moving in this country.

It's just that the DPWH took a lot of people by surprise. It did the repair work in the daytime, right when everybody is trying to get somewhere.

You know, the kids have to go to school, the fathers to work, and the mothers—they not only go to work, they also go to the laundry and the market as well, and then they can resume for the farthest.

And imagine what the horrendous traffic, caused by all the roadwork, is like! The guys of the roadwork is painfully slow, without any sense of urgency whatsoever.

As a bonus to the millions of commuters, the DPWH and the MMDA have kept their plan to conduct the repair work in the daytime a well guarded secret.

And I need I say more about people more always ready to kill each other on the streets lately?

I mean, come on, what is stopping the DPWH from doing the repair work at night any way? Imagine?

* * *

ONE reason may be is that this new administration wants the whole metropolis to see that it is finally doing something about the rotten state of our infrastructure.

Ing the government to default on its debts, only because the government can still borrow to pay off our maturing debts.

Heck, we even borrow just to pay for the interest on the total national debt.

By borrowing to pay off interests, the national debt will, in effect, just keep on going up.

On what we borrow for interest payment, we must also pay interest for, in very "professional economist" terms, such accumulated unpaid interest payment.

Besides, today, the national debt is the heaviest burden on the economy, simply because it weighs down on the national budget.

At least 40 percent of the annual budget goes to debt service, meaning for the payment of the principal and the interest.

There is hardly any money left, therefore, for 4Ps-type things like infrastructure, much less for welfare things like health care and education. Who needs them?

* * *

AND SO, the only way to start solving our debt problem is for this current administration to generate more revenue. In short, more taxes!

That's why some bright guys in Congress want to impose the 12 percent VAT on the winnings of Pagcor.

Under no charter, Pagcor only pays the 5 percent franchise tax, making it exempted from the other forms of excise tax.

If you impose the 12 percent VAT on the company, it will have to borrow money to finance its operations, because nothing will be left for things like the salaries of its workers.

All of Pagcor's customers—and I mean EVERY SINGLE—goes to the national government one way or another.

Pagcor can not—they not—remain a single venture of its customer. For Pagcor, it's not just a 12 percent VAT. Pagcor is subjected to a 100 percent tax. Got it, genius?

* * *

BUT aside from more taxes, the only administration is now talking about privatization to raise more funds for its various projects. Has he spoken?

First thing it must do is, it must try to activate the capital market. The stock market is moving, true but its activity is due to the entry of too money from abroad.

The money, as we all already know, does not stay here for good. It can leave faster than it came here.

So now the Palace is talking about selling the government shares in San Miguel. The move is actually good for the compa-

CONTINUED ON B3

Chinabank posted record profit of ₱2.71B in '04

CHINA Banking Corp. said it posted a record profit of ₱2.71 billion in 2004, continuing its strong performance in 2003 when it registered an income of ₱2.62 billion.

The bank said that its profits had been exceeding the ₱1.00-bn mark for the past three years since 2002. From only ₱1 billion in 2001, China Bank's profit grew to ₱2.6 billion in 2002.

The bank said in a statement that its strong performance could be attributed to improved interest margins, a conservative loan bookings, higher fee-based revenues and continued contributions from its trust and treasury related business.

Its return on equity is still the highest in the industry at 14.21 percent, while return on assets stood at 2.44 percent.

Its non-performing loans ratio improved to 2.4 percent last year from 3.4.09 percent in 2003.

Total assets (TAS) ended on loan loss provision last year, which beefed up its loan loss reserves to ₱6.75 billion. Total resources stood at ₱117 pn billion, above the ₱104.46 billion of the previous year.

Total deposits hit ₱85.45 billion boosted by the growth in low-cost deposits. Its total loans reached ₱51.44 billion, a ₱8.17 billion increase from 2003.

Elizabeth A. Sanchez

Peso hits . . .

Previous B1

"There's continued interest from offshore investors in Philippine equity and bond markets, but I think it's more from individuals—the likes of Mr. Gross—now, inching up to sell their US dollar holdings," said Mitch Stokes, treasurer of BancoEquity.

"The peso has long been on a downward slide since 1999 so now there's no stop but up," Stokes said.

At the market's 54.70 support level had been broken, Stokes said the next dollar support was now much deeper at 53.40-53.55, then that of 52.60 then 50.25.

"The Philippines in general has been playing catch-up for the first time since 1998. The main factor now is economic progress and how to address the budget deficit. People are having much more focus on what the government has been doing recently," Stokes said.

Meanwhile, the BSP announced that its gross international reserves stood at $15.376 billion as of January, lower by 1.7 percent than the $15.63 billion in end-December.

"The current GIR level was adequate to cover about four months of imports of goods and payments of services and income," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

The GIR level was also equivalent to 2.3 times the country's short-term debt based on original maturity and 1.5 times based on residual maturity.

Short-term debt based on residual maturity refers to outstanding short-term external debt on original maturity plus principal payments on medium- and long-term loans of the public and private sector falling due within the next 12 months.

The decline in reserves in January was attributed mainly to the debt service requirements of the national government and the BSP themselves, said.

Transcribe

February 7, 2005 Closing	Unit	Gross Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	$1.0000000	1.000000	54.7700
Japan	Yen	0.0095486	0.009549	0.5229
United Kingdom	Pound	1.9171170	1.917117	104.9900
Singapore	Dollar	0.5886868	0.588687	32.2400
Switzerland	Franc	0.8181821	0.818182	44.8100
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.1282051	0.128205	7.0230
Canada	Dollar	0.8732394	0.873239	47.8300
Singapore	Dollar	0.5714286	0.571429	31.3100
Australia	Dollar	0.7680851	0.768085	42.0600
Taiwan	Dollar	0.0307692	0.030769	1.6850
Brunei	Dollar	0.5882353	0.588235	32.2200
Thailand	Baht	0.0247113	0.024711	1.3535
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.2631579	0.263158	14.4100
Bahrain	Dinar	2.6525200	2.652520	145.2600
Kuwait	Dinar	3.4482759	3.448276	188.8600
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.2666667	0.266667	14.6000
UAE	Dirham	0.2724796	0.272480	14.9200
Qatar	Riyal	0.2747253	0.274725	15.0500
Argentina/Peso		0.3436334	0.343634	18.8200
Bolivia/Boliv		0.1250000	0.125000	6.8463
Brazil/Real		0.3861004	0.386100	21.1500
Chile/Peso		0.0018832	0.001883	0.1031
Colombia/Peso		0.0004292	0.000429	0.0235
Mexico/Peso		0.0914077	0.091408	5.0060
Paraguay/Guarani		0.0001677	0.000168	0.0092
Peru/Nuevo Sol		0.3003003	0.300300	16.4500
Uruguay/Peso		0.0384615	0.038462	2.1070
Venezuela/Bolivar		0.0004662	0.000466	0.0255
Bulgaria/Lev		0.6666667	0.666667	36.5100
Czech Republic/Koruna		0.0333333	0.033333	1.8260
Denmark/Krone		0.1666667	0.166667	9.1300
Hungary/Forint		0.0045455	0.004545	0.2490
Iceland/Krona		0.0153139	0.015314	0.8387
Norway/Krone		0.1612903	0.161290	8.8350
Poland/Zloty		0.3125000	0.312500	17.1200
Romania/Leu		0.0000307	0.000031	0.0017
Russia/Ruble		0.0357143	0.035714	1.9560
South Africa/Rand		0.1675774	0.167577	9.1800
Sweden/Krona		0.1369863	0.136986	7.5025
Turkey/Lira		0.0000000	0.000000	0.0000
Ukraine/Hryvnia		0.1975309	0.197531	10.8200
Slovak Republic/Koruna		0.0312500	0.031250	1.7120
Slovenia/Tolar		0.0041841	0.004184	0.2292
Croatia/Kuna		0.1369863	0.136986	7.5025
Estonia/Kroon		0.0638978	0.063898	3.4998

DISCLOSURES

FIRST Philippine Holdings Corp. confirmed that it expects to continue generating higher earnings this year, mainly on contributions from its power business and Lepanto operations.

• • •

APEA 6 Corp. will conduct an analysts' briefing at 9:00 a.m. on Feb. 11 at South Forbes A & B, 25/F Tower One, Ayala Triangle, Ayala Ave., Makati City.

• • •

EQUITABLE PCI Bank successfully sold its ₱3.00-million three-year senior note offering after concluding its international roadshow, which included Singapore, Hong Kong and London.

• • •

A. BROWN Co. Inc. bought 85,000 BPO shares at ₱9.85/per share.

• • •

FRANCIS Peter Zapata resigned as corporate secretary of **Bristol Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.** He was replaced by Fisher Arima on Jan. 5, 2004. *Complied by E.J. Ng, PDI Research*

BIR, Customs . . .

From page B1

ing. The shipment was misdeclared as electrical materials.

Customs also detained 10 million worth of fake 2NDs, which were misdeclared as 205 cases of plastic accessories from Malaysia. Other items seized were: P1.3-million worth of Mulling Lunchbox metal, which was misdeclared as plastic toys and consigned to Dimmafer Enterprises; P1.5-million Nissan Lagio and Nissan Frontier, which were consigned to a certain Katherine Yu Gabriel and which were misdeclared as personal effects, and a Toyota Bee-I and a Land Cruiser, which were attempted to be brought outside the Subic Freeport Zone without paying proper taxes, and a Nissan Lesun RX300, which was also brought in without payment of proper taxes and duties.

A year to crow about

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

TO ALL my Chinese friends greetings from me, BUNG HEI, and my wife, BIYCHIE. I was given a Chinese watch. It goes okay and, like you, I'm a bit worried about the rising oil prices. It can lead to recession. According to a Hong Kong newspaper, a rich businessman choked to death eating long-life noodles. As it is the Year of the Rooster, we will be eating cornflour. After eating our fill, we will close-in-fat.

My wife Susi plants surgery today. I ran up all her credit cards.

The IBC is against SEC. Ike Cathedic Church supports it. A previous poem said, "Yes, poss SEC I CAN. And that's how the MERCADO got its name." It is assuming VAT is Canada's fourth wife.

* * *

I AM TOO embarrassed to write jokes after Peedee's horror day when business took its pot cold and headed west P900 million. The IPO million offer was 8 times oversubscribed and was the most successful IPO in years. It hit the upper of its four P5Os on the first day when it briefly touched P52 and it is now P51.50. Our Research Department has a target of P56.

On my first week back from my holiday, I felt rejuvenated and revisited DJ Rupees. Although I merely updated in progress, the charts looked to P18 before settling back to P9, at which level, two foreign brokers are buying all the shares. The rights issue of 3 for 2 at P1 has been confirmed but no date has been set.

The following week, I did a detailed write-up on the mining industry that took up a great deal of space and effort. I used the findings of Research to predict the winners and they were right. Their target of P1.80 for PER was the absolute top and in my newsletter, I told all my subscribers to SELL at P1.70 and most of them did. I warned that after the surprise, interest would wane and PER fell back to P1.34. It is nearly always right to BUY two weeks ahead of an event and SELL a day or two before. Unfortunately speculators always anticipate events so by the time the good news is announced, it has already been discounted. **In current depressed levels, mining shares are worth watching again.**

Last week, although semi-retired, I wrote about three items. The upswing of the coal mine will be extended by the former US Secretary Dan on Power now replaced by Condoleezza and Rice. Today I do not intend to write up anything. I will, however, comment on company results and IPOs (more to the due).

I don't know who is responsible for the IPO listings but they ought to be debarred for allowing Mari-Is Water and SM Investment to be traded within 5 days of each other. The reason their most investors stick. Limited capital will be forced to choose between the two stocks and my guess is that most investors will go for a chance to invest at Shoemart. (A harmless, I will not pass any opinions and I have studied both prospectuses.

I do not like the method used here, by **which you have to reserve units without** knowing the price you will pay. Initially the price range of Institute was a ridiculous P22-P46. They eventually narrowed it to P30-P36, a spread of 20 percent. Manila Water is being offered at P1.50-1.8, a spread of 20 percent and it is simply unrealistic.

In London, decades ago, they used to offer **a stock at a minimum price and then allow investors to indicate what price they were willing to pay. Using preset method of pricing, investors could institute that they would:**

BUY 100,000 at P1.80 (minimum price set)
50,000 at P1.81
25,000 at P1.89
30,000 at P1.50

Somebody else might just bid P1.50 for 100,000 and make sure of getting shares. The **brokers would collect the thousands of bids** and the issuing house would make their staff work through the night so there were no overpayments to those fussy investing with the highest bid, they would gradually go down until the **issue was oversubscribed. Say for example,** the issue was fully subscribed at P1.50, then that would be the strike price. All those who bid P1.50 or more would get their shares at that price; all those below the strike price were eliminated.

The system did not work very well because investors put in ridiculously high bids just to be sure of getting shares. So the shares opened at an unrealistically high price, there was no support and the price fell rapidly. **It was about 5 or 6 attempts at which to sell a** Dutch auction, the method was abandoned and we returned to a fixed price system. Asking people to BUY shares without knowing the price turns the whole process into a guessing game. If I like to the way that's the SEC/PSE is going to Post 2004, where the government should legalize gaming. I don't see much difference.

After the phenomenal success of Manila's investors would almost certainly have overvalued Manila Water, but the dreams of SM Investments means we have to wait and IV. The last thing the Stock Exchange wants to see is the Manila Water issue going on a discount because of the competition. It will **make investors IPO-sensitive. I respectfully** suggest that the listing of SM Investments be delayed by 18 days so that there is a full 2 weeks between the two listing dates. I also feel strongly that in the future, we adhere to a fixed price. That way analysts can determine whether future issues are good value or not and advise their clients accordingly.

The results from Globe were disappointing. In the second quarter, boosted by the election, they added 1.6 million new subscribers. In the third quarter, they added 1.2 million, which was in line with expectations. But in the last quarter, which includes the Christmas season, they only added 800,000. Touch Mobile doubled its sales and blamed competition. Now Pilipino, ahead of its rivals, is trying to persuade the SEC that Digitel (Inter-Cellular) does not have the right to offer an unlimited call and text service as they do in the US. If so, how

8 KEYS TO YOUR DIFFERENT INTERESTS

Only from PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

DFPI seeks compromise deal with BIR

By Michelle V. Ramos

FINES OWNED: First Dairy Pure Philippines Inc. is seeking a compromise deal with the Bureau of Internal Revenue over some P1 billion in unpaid tax liabilities.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr. said Dairy Pure Philippines representatives had informed BIR officials in a meeting that the company could not afford to pay its entire back taxes.

He said Dairy Pure Philippines was working on an agreement that would allow it to pay only portion of the amount.

Parayno said the BIR would study the company's request. However, he said one possible compromise would involve the waiver of the interests charges and penalties on the back taxes.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Jim Sinseuat said that of the estimated P1 billion in unpaid liabilities of Dairy Pure Philippines, about P480 million represented interest and penalty charges. The P480 million represents the actual unpaid income and value-added taxes that accumulated from 1999 to 2002.

But Sinseuat explained that under the law, the BIR could only grant a compromise or abate a taxpayer's liabilities under certain circumstances.

The following factors can support a request for compromise with the BIR:

- If the concerned taxpayer can establish that there is "doubtful validity" to the accuracy of the amount of taxes being collected;
- If the taxpayer is financially incapacitated to pay the taxes; and
- If there is administrative difficulty in collecting the taxes, and the amount of tax assessed by the BIR was excessive.

Dairy Pure Philippines earlier asked the government to exempt the company from income taxes and VAT, saying it was also government-owned.

The BIR and the Department of Finance, however, said that even government-owned and –controlled corporations were required to remit taxes.

"It cannot be exempted because we just because it is a state-owned firm. GOCCs have been subject to taxes since President Corazon Aquino's term, when a law imposing taxes on them was enacted," another BIR official explained.

The state-owned firm, which is a subsidiary of the Philippine Tourism Authority, had been seeking tax exemption since its several years now. During the term of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, the DOF turned down this request.

The BIR is hard pressed to collect tax leaks and crack down on tax evasion, as it is tasked to collect P587 billion this year, or 16 percent higher than the P470 billion it collected in 2004.

The BIR, accounting for over 66 percent of the national government's revenue collection, missed its P476.3-billion collection goal last year. The shortfall, however, was offset by the higher-than-projected revenue collection of other agencies, including the Bureau of Customs.

Insurance body for pre-need firms pushed

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROMPTED by the recent financial agonies ailing College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP), a member of the House of Representatives is planning to file a bill this week seeking the creation of a special body that will serve as an insurance firm for pre-need companies.

Manila representative Jaime Lopez, concurrently the chair of the House committee on banks and financial intermediaries, said he would file a bill setting up Philippine Pre-Need Insurance Corp., which would be patterned after Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC).

"With it, the insurer can be reinsured. Just like PDIC insuring the liabilities of banks," Lopez told reporters.

He added that the bill would supplement moves by Congress to transfer the authority to supervise pre-need companies from the Securities and Exchange Commission to the Insurance Commission.

Lopez said the proposed Philippine Pre-Need Insurance Corp. would look into troubled pre-need firms by examining their books. The body can be composed of representatives from the government and private sectors. A bailout fund, that will cover the pre-need insurance firm's liabilities, will be pooled from contributions of the pre-need firms.

Lawmakers like representative Luis Villafuerte, in the meantime, urged the SEC and the pre-need industry to file their recommendations on the bill proposing a code governing pre-need firms.

He said the SEC should comment on whether pre-need firms were also involved in cases of investors and whether their products were considered securities. This, he said, would determine whether pre-need firms should still be under the supervision of the SEC.

The SEC and the pre-need firms were also asked to give their comments to the proposed increase in paid-up capital for pre-need firms.

He said companies should also be fined on a proposal to prohibit pre-need firms' from investing their trust funds to companies affiliated with shareholders of the pre-need companies.

Villafuerte also strongly expressed his reservations about the treatment of the actuarial reserve liability (ARL) or the present value of a pre-need firm's future obligations matched with the present value of its trust fund. This is also considered as the net liabilities of a firm to its plan holders.

He said the ARL should be used as a guiding principle for premiums paid, and capitalization and should not be treated as an expense.

CAP First vice president Bobby Cafe, who was present during the hearing, assured the House committee and the SEC that it had provided the P424 million of its P1.4 billion in liabilities to plan holders for the insured amounts. The several unmeet trade in March. For the industry, he said CAP would sell some of its assets in its trust fund and draw on a loan from First American financiers.

US ENVOY AT AMCHAM MEET
US Ambassador to the Philippines Kristie Kenney (right) reiterates his country's support for the US-RP alliance for mutual progress at the recent American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (AmCham) general meeting at Shangri-La Hotel in Makati City. The meeting, presided by AmCham president Rick Swanson (left), was also attended by members and officers of the Rotary Club of Makati and Rotary Club of Manila.

Foreign business backs alien ID system

TEN JOINT Foreign Chambers of Commerce (JFC) recently urged the government to speed up "the smooth and effective implementation throughout the Philippines" of the new high technology-based system for documenting and identifying foreigners on extended visits in the country recently launched by the Bureau of Immigration (BI).

The system, called Alien Certificate of Registration Identification Card (ACR I-Card), was designed to boost the government's bid to upgrade services to the expatriate community to global standards and coop international crimes.

The system uses biometrics technology developed by Bloomotion Israel Electro Corp. It is expected to significantly reduce processing time for alien documentation.

Since the I-Card cannot be faked, it will help tighten the noose on illegal aliens. It is also seen to generate some P1.5 billion for the government in the next 10 years.

The JFC groups the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, British Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, French Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines, Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines and the Korean Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In response to the group's call, Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. has ordered the incorporation of the special return certificate, the re-entry permit and the annual report for legal aliens into the ACR I-Card.

Fernandez also ordered the setting up of special processing lanes for ACR I-Card holders at departure and arrival counters at the Naia terminals 1 and 2.

Fernandez also ordered the setting up of modern aerol-readers in BI lanes for ACR I-Card holders entering or leaving the country via major ports and airports including the two Naia terminals.

The government also assured the foreign chambers that data capturing stations for ACR I-Card applicants were being set up in various parts of the country, including the ports of Iqui Fernando in La Union, Iquan, Iloilo and Angeles City.

Court orders Maynilad to modify rehab plan

By Christine A. Esplicar

RESTRUCTURING: Maynilad Water Services Inc. was ordered by the court to file a modified rehabilitation plan that would incorporate the recommendations of designated court receiver Rosario Bautista.

Quezon City Regional Trial Court Judge Reynaldo Donato S. Ancheta ordered Maynilad legal counsels led by lawyers Victorino Bautista Co. to modify Maynilad's rehabilitation plan, which would be the fourth revision of the plan, to include the firm's recent debt restructuring arrangements with creditors and the new tariffs approved by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System.

Maynilad was required to submit the modified rehabilitation plan within 30 days from Jan. 31, 2005, when the court issued the order.

Bautista said it was important to incorporate in the plan Maynilad's new arrangements with lenders, which has P70 billion in exposure to the firm, and the foreign and local creditor banks. Maynilad owes its creditors about P9 billion, excluding accrued interests as of 2003.

A report of the company's executives, earlier submitted to the SEC, indicated that some P1.4 billion in obligations to local banks, including Development Bank of the Philippines, Equitable-PCI Bank, Bank Commercial Banking Corp. and the Banco Bank, would no longer be converted to preferred shares to Maynilad as earlier planned.

Debts to BCBC and UBP will be repaid over nine years from 2000 to 2013.

Equitable-PCI Bank's P5.00 million exposure to Maynilad will be subjected to an all-set arrangement involving the water concessionaire's current deposits in EPCIBank.

The BSWS will "officially but temporarily" takeover the water concession from the Lopez Group and its French partner Suez (previously Ondeo).

Bearbull

From page B1

cause it took so long for them to come to this conclusion?

We must await a reply from the SEC but I cannot see why a small telecom company cannot take a huge gamble to break free a market now unified by Smart and Globe. At the end of 2004, OCT had 1.1 million subscribers. Its target for 2005 is to get 2 million subscribers, which is the minimum required to break even. They may fail to achieve this or they may not be able to cope with the volume of traffic. That is their gamble but if they succeed, and I hope they do, why should the NTC stifle competition that benefits the public. People love Jibbs so he must be happy about these days, particularly as the peso read that the stock market is at a 5-year high and the rich are getting richer. So I hope that the NTC will not interfere. Unfortunately, Smart and Globe are giants with immense clout and the government may buckle.

In the past, they have shown themselves more beholden to corporations and religious organizations than to the public, but I hope that right will prevail and DOTC he sit inward to continue, in view of their reporting, I would guess that PLDT is going to raise its 2004 target to P1.2 billion. They will still survive billions from Smart as the result of the change in the revenue sharing, which gives PLDT 40 percent on their rate instead of 30 percent. This is a perfectly legitimate investment.

Whether using their huge losses, but it will not, the government must. For his part, he'll be sure to advise [illegible]@hotmail.com

Breaktime ...

From page B1

up. It removes the threat of a government takeover, getting the business out of the dizzying orbit of politics.

Presently, under its stand Ed- uardo Cojuangco Jr., San Miguel invited investors like Kirin Beer of Japan and the JSE group of Tatung Henry Sy, to share off the government takeover of management, a move conceived and executed by Enrile's most trusted co-worker, San Miguel vice chairman Ang.

So to long now, some groups close to this one of frustration were salivating over San Miguel. What stopped them from grabbing the management away from Enrile's group was the sentiment of the market.

How do you kick out a management team that is doing so well, attracting investments from the likes of Kirin?

Now, the question is, will the sale of those government-held shares in San Miguel materialize within one? Mentioned? Hard to say?

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500,000 – 999,999	5.875	6.125	6.375	6.625
1.00M – 4,999,999	6.500	6.750	6.875	7.125
5.00M – 9,999,999	6.625	6.875	7.000	7.375
10 million and up	6.875	7.125	7.250	7.625

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Take Charge Doc!
Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

Does having a healthy lifestyle mean that I won't get heart disease?

A direct answer would be NO. Heart disease has a myriad factors. Age, 45 and up for males, 55 and up for females, and family history are non-modifiable factors or so-called "fixed" factors. The modifiable risks are smoking, dyslipidemia (high LDL cholesterol and triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol), diabetes, hypertension and obesity. Quitting smoking for smokers, eating healthy food (low cholesterol) and regular exercise (30-40 minutes brisk walking 3-4 times a week) are such lifestyle changes which may lessen the risk to heart ailment. Obese individuals should aim for an ideal weight by following a diet program and more rigorous exercises. For hypertensive and diabetic persons, a regular follow-up with their physician is highly recommended.

Living a healthy lifestyle may not totally prevent heart disease but the risk of developing one is significantly lowered.

This week's answer to our question on thalpies and heart ailment was provided by our accredited doctor at Chinese General Hospital and Medical Center, Dr. Allan B. Ruales. Dr. Ruales, a MEDICard provider for over 5 years, specializes in Internal Medicine. He graduated from Medicine at the Manila Central University-FDTMF in 1988 then took residency training for a specialization in Internal Medicine at Chinese General Hospital until 1993. He also subspecializes in Adult Cardiology, finishing his residency at St. Luke's Medical Center Heart Institute. Currently, Dr. Ruales is also a faculty member of the College of Medicine at MCU-FDTMF. MEDICard members may seek consultation services at his clinic, Room C-11, Mondays to Saturdays, except Tuesdays, from 1-5 in the afternoon.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA c/o TAKE CHARGE DOC! or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for inquiries on health matters.

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THE NORTH Face comes to town /C5

Keeping your workout balanced

We should strive for balance in all aspects of our lives. It is not healthy to have a lopsided life—all work and no recreation time, for example.

Our exercise programs also have to be balanced so we can reduce the risk of being injured, getting bored and wasting our time because the workout is no longer effective.

Here are different ways to have a balanced workout.

Heart and muscles

Imagine your heart as the engine of a car and your muscles and bones the body. A car would not be considered to be in good shape even though the engine was working fine if the doors were falling off.

The opposite is also true—a car with the most attractive paint job and solid structure would still be a lemon if the engine was not running well.

A balanced workout program combines both cardiovascular and muscular strength components.

Strength and flexibility

Many exercisers give little importance to stretching, sometimes even loathing it! Inability to stretch as a matter of time. Strengthening the muscles while neglecting to stretch them is asking for trouble. It will result in an unbalanced, prone-to-injury body that is overly tight and inflexible.

We once had a male client in the gym who sneezed out without stretching though he was told his tight hamstrings would eventually cause lower back problems. This actually set for a few years until one day his lower back went into a tight spasm that needed physical therapy.

We never had to remind him again on stretch. It's said, but many people have to learn the hard way.

Right and left sides of the body

Fitness writer Suzanne Schlosberg interviewed several experts regarding right-left imbalances. John Shewmaker, president of a rehabilitation clinic in Chicago, claimed just about every athlete he worked with had the imbalance. He said it was also prevalent among fitness enthusiasts.

The experts said if one side of your body was more than 10 percent stronger than the other side, you could cause excessive wear and tear on your joints, muscles and ligaments. They suggested testing yourself by performing exercises one side at a time to see which side was stronger and had better control.

To fix the problem, Tom Purvis, head trainer of the National Academy of Sports Medicine, suggests challenging each side of your body separately. Lift the amount of weight you can with your weak side and maintain the original weight on your strong side. Do more sets. Then, do a third set using both sides simultaneously while focusing on making the weak side do its share of the work. Continue this way until both sides were not in strength.

You may find that one side is a bit more flexible than the other. Remedy the situation by stretching more on the tight side. Hold the stretches longer and do them more often than in the more flexible side) until both sides become more or almost even.

In terms of being steady on our feet, many people don't realize they have very poor balance on one side compared to the others. If you are right-handed, you will probably be extremely on your left leg.

Find out which side has less balance by standing on one leg for a minute and count how many times you almost lose your balance or have to touch the floor to steady yourself.

Upper and lower parts of the body

This workout imbalance can lead to an asymmetrical shape, not to mention unbalanced strength. Consider a man who builds muscle mass only in his upper body—he ends up looking like a "lollipop" or "chicken drumstick." Another example is a runner with strong legs but flabby and weak upper body.

Front and back of the body

Exercisers often only focus on what they can see in the mirror (the front part of the body) and forget about what they cannot see. Crunches in the back). Too many exercisers are done for the front muscles and not enough or no exercise for the muscles behind.

Every muscles work in opposite pairs around a joint. You'll only have to be strong and flexible to prevent and stabilize the joint.

This doesn't mean that the strength of opposing muscle groups (an example is the quadriceps and hamstrings—front and back of the thighs) has to always be exactly equal. However, each muscle has to be as strong as to be within its functional limits, otherwise, the joint (in our example, the knee) is not stable and will be prone to injury.

Too much of a good thing

Too much of the same type of exercise can also cause problems because you overtrain the same area of the body day after day. A

exercise's keyword had to be open and not recently be a non-Achilles tendon (a thick cord like tissue at the heel) caused by using this stepping machine for two hours a day. Cross-training or doing different exercises not only keeps the injuries away but also keeps your workout fresh and exciting.

Activity and rest

Too much exercise can actually be bad for you. Moderate amounts of exercise strengthen the immune system making us less prone to colds and flu. Too much exercise has the opposite effect.

Make sure you balance out your activity and rest periods. But don't use too much either because, as someone once said, "Too much rest makes us rust!"

***

The Association of Fitness Professionals of the Phils. will hold a one-day seminar on Feb. 26 at the University of the Philippines Diliman campus. Topics are: The Latest Fitness Trends and Research, Exercise for Menopausal Women, Agility Training for Badminton, Cardio Dance, Latin Aerobics, Yoga Pilates Pealate, and Hip Hop. Call 9092761 or 9917-5161/62.

Visit www.thenapsonline.info

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

45-degree bent-over narrow row

(SMS) and strengthens the muscles at the sides and middle of your back, back of the shoulders and biceps.

Equipment:
A pair of dumbbells.

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with your feet apart a little wider than hip-width.

2. Bend forward from the hips while keeping your back straight and knees slightly bent. Your upper body should be at a 45-degree angle with the floor and your arms should hang down in line with your shoulders.

3. Squeeze your shoulder blades together and maintain that position throughout the entire exercise. This is your starting position.

4. Pull the weights up by bending with your elbows until they're by your sides.

5. Slowly lower the weight back to starting position.

6. Repeat.

Performance tips:

1. This is an advance exercise and should only be done by individuals who have developed sufficient strength to maintain a straight spine with a natural curve in the lower back. A fair amount of flexibility is also needed in the hamstrings or back of the thighs.

2. It is very important to keep the shoulder blades squeezed together throughout the entire exercise, otherwise the back will be rounded.

3. Exhale as you pull your elbows backward, inhale as you return to starting position.

Repetitions:
Do 12-15 repetitions.

BRITISH rock singer Gordon Sumner, better known as "Sting"

HONG Kong'ienne Christine Loh with her friend, super fun businessman Craig Ehrlich

BUSINESS magnate Buddy Roo with wife Ruby Diaz, international polo player Hugo Zubiel and Metropolitan Museum's trustee southern gent Ike Mazzola

POPULAR couple Bina Manresa and wife, vivacious Merchi Gonzales

BEAUTIFUL people: businessman and ex-singer Johnny Velasquez with his love, Maripi Muscat, with Nicole Ortega and American beauty Debbie Yabut

WAITING for the concert to start: Maripi Muscat and brilliant lawyer Lisa Araneta Marcos

ZOMG, beauties Maricris Zobel with daughters Bianca, Paola and Natalia, plus Bianca Z.'s steady, Hong Kong-based David Jacob

Breathless in Hong Kong

SUPER pals Benito "Benitoy" Araneta and wife, beautiful Bobi Sarreno, with Irene Marcos and husband Gregg Araneta

LET the concert begin. Gorgeous beauty Carol Hadley G. with close pals Rosanna Fraser and her husband, southern personality Joe Ferro

SUPER Greg Isaac wifey Ai Tengo a outfits wife, classic beauty Carla Reyes, with ace photographer Alex Van Hagen, in front of the camera for a change

GETTING away from the hustle-bustle of Metro Manila can be exciting. Jetting off to Hong Kong to watch a concert is an even bigger thrill.

Nevertheless, the way to enjoy Hong Kong is to know where and when the action happens. So, palanggas, these are some of his experiences and discover in this glitzy city of skyscrapers and colorful lights.

The concert we were all excited about was by none other than that world-class master soprano, ex-teacher, ex-lead singer of the popular band The Police, and highly acclaimed composer, actor and die-hard environmental activist, Sting. He was performing in Hong Kong to promote his latest solo album "Sacred Love."

Manille's young big, and young-at-heart set wasted no time grabbing tickets for this brilliant singer-composer's one night performance.

One guy's mega organizer was hotshot multi-faceted business entrepreneur, bon vivant and witty Al Tengco. He personally made the arrangements with his business associates in Hong Kong.

Service with a smile

Pre-emblin's task to enjoy the comfy wide seats of our pal, Philippine Airlines. The one-hour 15-minute trip seemed so much shorter because of the excellent service from the crew that always had a smile for the passengers.

The trip was made even more enjoyable because half the crew were those Southern personas of charm, my fellow Bicolnon from Bacolod and Iloilo, no less.

Most of the group took the 8 a.m. flight so as not to waste the day but not photographer Alex Wh., Chay Gojangco and his wife, Marietta Kirhoni, from Marcos and her husband, Gregg Araneta, Bim and Monchet Manresa were on the 3:30 p.m. flight. Arriving on the 8 p.m. flight from Manille was actress/ hostess Monalisa and his soul-mate, good looking model Mon-Son Diego.

Upon our arrival, Shangri-La's efficient personnel whisked Alex Van Hagen and our self to their Mercedes limo to our hotel where we were welcomed like royalty. A personal touch that the eye-catching Kowloon Shangri-La does for its clients, dahlings.

Since we were in HK a day before the concert, Al Tengco organized a scrumptious dinner for all 10 of us at 8:30 p.m. in the famous Chinese restaurant called Lei Garden on the 1/F of the CITY Tower in Wan Chai.

Party time

After dinner it was "let's party" time at the lobby of the Conrad Hotel where most of the gang stayed. The others were at the Kowloon Shangri-La and the Ritz Carlton.

No sooner than you could bat an eyelash, Bings and Marian Jobel bounced in with glam pal Carol Carol, Jil and Carl Tengco, Johnny Velasquez and Maripi Blanzat, Debbie Yabut and Nicole Ortega, Ruby and Buddy Roo, Gregg and Irene Araneta, and lawyer Perry Pe without his wife, my palanggas, Bobbie Gabungcal, "who was tired and dying too well", Perry explained to me.

Then, Connie Ramos and wifey, ultra glam Jacqui Rivera-ra, with their sons, ace underwater photographer Gabby, wife Bev and Elizabeth Rocha, accompanied by mom-mother-in-law Mrs. and Bob Ramos, showed up for a late-late night cap and to wish Roberto and Bligo Lobel a happy, happy silver wedding anniversary.

Horrendous experience

The following day, after a quick snack at the Conrad Hotel mezzanine, many of us dashed off to the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Center with empty stomachs since the service at the mezzanine of the hyatt was horrendous. The Tellin Bat's manager even joined his voice with one of the gals in our group who asked why it was taking almost an hour for our sandwiches, soup and water, to arrive, would you believe?

Anyway, I couldn't believe the jaw-dropped audience of 13,000 or probably more at the concert venue. And believe me not a single person was disappointed with the show.

On his second song, Sting had the whole venue on its feet, clapping, yelling, howling, singing and dancing.

Backed up by two Afro-English gals with powerful voices and fab 4th-piece band, Sting showed off his magnificent as a singer and brilliant songwriter and why he has been a mega performer for 30 years.

Sting started the show with "Send Your Love", which was inspired by the 9/11 tragedy. Then he really got on the case, pumping the audience on its feet, clapping and dancing to his rocking tunes like "Fragile," "Field Of Gold," "Magic," "Moonsong," "Englishman in New York" and, one of my favorites "Desert Rose."

Scene stealer

When he did his hit Grammy-winning song "Whenever I Say Your Name," singing it with the fabulous Joy Enos (one of his backup singers) who has a mind-boggling, powerful voice, the 30,000-strong audience went almost berserk. In fact, there were times you couldn't hear Sting with the applause, whistles and howls of appreciation of the concert goers, dahlings.

The review of the show in the lunch China Morning Post put it beautifully: "Joy Enos brought the supreme vocals home, literally."

After two hours and 20 minutes doing 16 of his songs, Sting went back on stage for one encore, but two more encores, to the delight of the ecstatic crowd, we did the number one sound bit, "Every breath You Take," leaving the 30,000 or more of us four completely breathless. Yes, Evening with Sting" was an unforgettable, memorable, one-of-a-kind experience, dahlings.

Ciao.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare

SULTRY beauty Benjie Dino-Devesa and her divorced lawyer Perry Pe

MULTI-FACETED businessman Chay Gojangco and wife Marissa Bihasa

MODEL Marc San Diego and popular architect Antoni Manahan

THE TUKSON duo: International businessman Concon Tuason with his wife Sue and Gemp (far right) and ultra glam gal Donel Manthara Tuason

P&G's ever-smiling, helpful crew: Reginard Galang, Ms. Agnes Briones, Haydee Enriquez, Cora Nadrinlad, Leilani Fabian and Paulo Bayot

PHILIPPINE Airlines' efficient crew of Southerners in business class: Beautiful beauty Tina Tuazy-Ramos Tugle with top flight purser Diana Kintanar, George Rebollo and Tolly Lopez

LIFESTYLE

Care for your 'inner ecology'

Inner Out

GAY GARCIA

"Proper nutrition can save lives, even one million."—inspired by Hippocrates, father of Medicine

THE HOLISTIC-ity of a moment in our body can create disease. In fact, Dr. Francisco Contreras, in his book, "Health in the 21st Century," says "the lack of a single nutrient can [cause] cause death."

Ecology of the body

It's not only the outside environment that should concern us but also our internal ecology. Constantly bombarded by a toxic environment due to air and food pollution, we are faced with a challenge—how to maintain good health in so big an role.

We have to turn inward because "the internal ecology of our body determines our health."

Good food = good health

Most diets as a science began 100 years after, a man called James Lind discovered in 1750 that foods had functions. Not only did food satisfy hunger, it also could prevent and cure diseases. Many nutrients still known for preventive properties like oranges and lemons. Those who ate the fruits recovered in six days.

Dr. Carmen Penk invented the term "vitamin" when he discovered vitamin A in 1912. It was because of him that we can be healthier now.

Until today, many studies in the field of nutrition are finding cures for diabetes, obesity, cholesterol, mental illness and cancer.

Nutrition researcher Gladys Block, PhD, University of California, did an analysis to determine if there was a connection between cancer and diet. Out of 99 studies, 80 showed that a connection existed. The results also showed fruits and vegetables were the "first line of defense" against many types of cancers.

Vitamin C and bioflavonoids (found in berries, cantaloupe, green leafy veggies and citrus fruits) strengthen the body's immune system against cancer-similar results research

LIFE 11

Horse show jumping championships Feb. 19

THE KAMESETA Cup 2005 will be held at the Manila Polo Club on Feb. 19.

This event, the second to be held, is one of the biggest and most exciting horse show jumping championships of the year. Two-round and amateur riders are participating in the 1.20, 1.15, 1.00, 0.90 metres jumps.

A Team Relay Event and Pursuance will round off the competitions that will begin at 12:30 p.m.

Winners in the Kameseta Cup 2004 were Isabella Parafin, class 0.80 m; Alexis Cortes, class 1.00 m; Derick Wiata, class 1.10 m; and Asher Arroyo, class 1.20 m. Champions of the low levels met high levels: top scorer were Carmen Silvestre and Vic Rocha, respectively.

Asian Games gold medalist Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski and Olympian Toni Leviste showed their talents in a tie-bar exhibition match.

David Reynolds, the polo and equestrian director, said they hoped this year's event would be just as successful as last year's.

He said Kameseta was putting up very generous prize money to encourage participants to train as hard as possible to prepare for the event.

Fairmarts president Gaye Regue said the Filipino equestrian could be competitive internationally as shown by Jaworski and Leviste. The tournament hoped to contribute to developing young Filipinos to become world-class athletes.

Call the Manila Polo Club at 8177-053.

UST holds course on clinical practice

PHYSICIANS and paramedical personnel are invited to the UST Department of Medicine's 27th post-graduate course it. 1965 "Clinical Problem Solving: Pearing Principles into Practice" from Feb. 9 -11.

The scientific forum will gather the country's top clinicians and medical experts at the university's Thomas Aquinas Research Center on Espana, Manila.

They will present comprehensive approaches to common medical conditions based on updated international and local guidelines.

Topics include ways of dealing with patients with bleeding disorders and breast mass, biological treatment options for patients with rheumatic disorders, updates on urinary tract infection and community-acquired pneumonia in immunocompetent adults, and guidelines on tuberculosis and updates on obstructive lung diseases.

The St. Thomas Aquinas Research Complex is UST's primal showcase of researches in the medical, natural and chemical sciences, as well as in the social, philosophical and theological sciences. It houses exhibits one wall all of UST's research centers.

Topics include ways of dealing with patients with bleeding

Call 7494028.2 or 7405488.

Yoga retreat on Boracay

MANDALA Spa on Boracay will hold a yoga retreat on Feb. 16-20, with teachers Mo-ching Yip and Louise Ravelo.

Yip, a yoga practitioner for 15 years, has been teaching for four years. Ravelo has an advanced teacher's training degree from yoga masters in India.

The practice of yoga helps improve health and physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The Yoga Holiday Retreat leaves ample free time to enjoy Boracay's famous white sand beach.

For inquiries and booking reservations, log on to www.mandalaspa.com or call (632) 3865456.

Care for your 'inner ecology'

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and esophagus.

The Oxford Stazer National Cancer Institute has drawn up a cancer prevention guideline that suggests, among others, the eating of five generous servings of fruits and vegetables daily.

A 10-year study by T. Hirayama of 265,118 subjects revealed that people with a food regimen high in vegetables (especially those containing beta-carotene) lowered their risk of contracting lung, stomach or prostate cancer.

Balanced nutrition

Some macronutrients come from proteins, carbohydrates and fats.

Carbohydrates are the main sources of energy because they are easily metabolized by the body. They come from vegetables (potatoes, green leafy veggies, apples, barley, sweetcorn, bananas, tomatoes, corn wheat, mangoes, sunflower seeds).

Proteins regulate energy production, building of tissue and fighting of disease. The nutrient proteins in metabolize are found grains—wheat, corn, rice, beans, lentils, etc. Proteins from beef, pork, fish and chicken are not easily processed by the body "due to the complexity of their molecules... only a small part of them can be by benefit to the body while the remainder remains as harmful waste."

Amino, acids are basic building blocks of protein and help in the formation of muscle cells, antibodies, among others. However, in boost health, take amino acids in the form of spinach with alfalfa at the top of the list.

Fats are essential to healthy living as they contain twice the energy of carbohydrates. However, people tend to overload on them. The recommended dosage is not more than two tablespoons a day (Includes oils and butter used in cooking). Saturated fat includes pork fat, beef tallow, poultry eggs, milk products. Unsaturated fat comes from olive oil, corn, soy, peanut and cottonseed oils.

Micronutrients are necessary for balanced nutrition. This means there may be a need for vitamins and minerals supplements. While there is still some controversy over the need for supplements, many doctors have started to prescribe them.

How to get nutrients into the body

- Chew food properly, allowing it more time to mix with saliva. Digestion begins in the mouth. Take your time eating a meal. Don't rush.
- Enjoy mealtimes. Do not eat while stressed. Relax before eating. Take a deep breath. Release your breath slowly. Think happy thoughts (imagine you are stationed by seafood, or smell lilac lights inside).
- Do not mix liquids with your meals because they interfere with digestion especially if they are too cold or too hot. Take a small glass of water before or after a meal, not during. Water should ideally be consumed in between meals.
- Do not overeat. Overloading your stomach will interfere with proper digestion.
- Make time for exercises. Defecation is a very vital function needed for health. Don't postpone the "urge to go" and wait for a more convenient time. This causes constipation.
- Include nutrition supplements. Take your multivitamin/ mineral daily after a full meal.
- If you have digestive problems, consider taking enzymes. Before yet, consult your physicians.

Juice up (supper)

Open your refrigerator and look for greens/fruits lying around—green pepper, lettuce, tomatoes, carrot, apples. Mix in blender. Drink up!

Love and light!

Thanks to Br. Omar Arabic for lending us his books.

LIFESTYLE

FROM tents to jackets to bags, The North Face is the one-stop shop for complete camping gear

When North meets South

THE LIMITED edition Quantum Hyvent insulated jacket

TODAY Ms. Asuncion, tomorrow the world. Nancy "Garduch" Garduce is the first Filipina to have reached the highest altitude on record. (Photo courtesy of The North Face)

Text and photos by Bebs Fonseca
Contributor

IT was only a matter of time before The North Face made its way through Southeast Asia.

Put up in 1966 by two hiking enthusiasts, The North Face is today recognized the world over for its high-performance outdoor gear and apparel. Its logo (snow-covered mountain with breakthrough sunburst) is a design and style. Alcher-ists sound boring, but wait until you hear that The North Face is the brand of choice for the tenants of "Into the Gle" (check out all their jackets in the first episode). Have what could be more Fashionista than that? Or more stylish statement than keeping warm in the comfortable of the latest "The Amazing Race?"

Complete line

The North Face first came to the Philippines in 2003, offering shoes and bags in Bed Rock and sporting goods stores. Its first specialty store, however, did not open until September 2004 in Shangri-La Plaza. A second shop opened in the Robinsons Power Plant Mall in November.

The stores carry the complete line of bags, shoes, camping gear such as water bottles, cooking utensils, tents, sleeping bags, accessories like eyewear, hats and scarves, and apparel, even lines of edition jackets filled with (warm for extreme cold).

While the idea of down jackets in this country may seem absurd to some, Joel Chan, North Face's M Trend manager, attests to the fact that whole families have been purchasing gear for weekend trips to winter resorts in Japan. Their market also includes the small "weekend warrior"—groups who go hiking or mountain climbing on weekends.

Most of their shoppers are outbound Filipinos and foreigners who visit/ reside. Finding The North Face products at reasonable prices adjusted to the Philippine setting.

According to Chan, their best sellers are the apparel that can be suitable for their "design and lifestyle technology."

The North Face takes rightful pride in its Ultra-violet Protection Fabric (UPF) 50+, which protects from harmful ultraviolet rays; its Polartec Power Dry® fleece, which resists wind and abrasion and has a rubber coating for stretching ability; and its Vapor-Wick, a quick-drying fabric that pulls sweat away from the skin to the surface where it evaporates (just brush off the water from a jacket or squeeze the garment after a sudden downpour and it's as good as dry).

All that is laudable, but what about features? Well, aside from being high-performance, the jackets are light, chic, comfy and deliciously colorful.

Down comfort

The price to beat is the Quantum Hyvent, a limited edition ultrawaterproof "800 power fill down" jacket. Exclusive to The North

>>>>>> 11

AUTOGRAPHED life-size poster of Cardino adorns the Boulevard

BACKPACKS of all shapes and sizes

THE ONLY eyewear made specifically for mountaineering

FIRST-class camping gear

THE FACES of The North Face: Johnny Tiao, managing director; Remi Gardoce; Rod Chan, brand manager

THE NORTH Face shop in Rockwell Power Plant Mall

When North meets South

The North Face train of thought is 'Never stop exploring' and that's easy for the company to say because it makes high-tech, high-performing, highly protective apparel and accessories

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Since, 900 power fill down is the highest quality down symmetrically available. It is the lightest and most compressible down with the best warmth-to-weight ratio. Each Quiescent Bugsac is numbered, as only 5,000 were made.

In addition to exclusive jackets, "The North Face is the only brand (in the Philippines) that carries eyewear made specifically for mountaineering," says Chan. The lightweight eyewear is specially made for high altitude, provides ventilation, possesses aluminum frames for thermal resistance and can even act as a substitute for skiing goggles. The North Face is also the first to use the Venturi effect to ventilate lens fogging.

The driving force behind such technological advances is The North Face team of athletes. Composed of the world's finest mountaineers, alpinists, climbers, skiers, snowboarders and endurance adventurers who have defined the limits of what is humanly possible, the team pursues adventures in remote regions of the world to test their personal limits and the limits of their gear, thereby helping the brand create innovative designs that push new technologies and inspire cutting-edge products.

Pinoy peak freak

The Philippines has earned a place in The North Face athletes' team in the person of Remi "Gardoce" Gardoce, the Filipino mountaineer who returned recently from a successful climb at Mt. Aconcagua, Argentina, the highest peak in the western hemisphere.

Mt. Aconcagua is an expedition level mountain that has an altitude of 22,842 ft with very treacherous conditions.

"At 13,000 ft, there's no organization to be seen. It's very windy, very chilly with temperatures dropping to negative 20 or lower," says Gardoce.

So if such conditions weren't tough enough, a snowstorm hit his two consecutive nights—two was enough for Gardoce's team of 15 members to decide to abort the climb, despite the sun smiles upon acclimatizing their bodies and preparing for the storms. But the force was determined and carried on along with a forefish national.

"I heard of those who had to quit climbing because of the altitude—they felt like choking (only) the very windy and chilly weather. I would have experienced the same thing if I did not have the proper equipment," says Gardoce. "But every time I wrestled I was in full battle gear with four layers of clothing—my down jacket, fleece, The North Face down jacket and The North Face shell jacket."

Having been properly outfitted, he not only survived the climb but succeeded in reaching the top of the mountain.

Aside from apparel, Gardoce also had with him the best gear and accessories, from shoes and bags to tents.

APPAREL is their best seller due to design and fabric technology

"Actually, this was the first time I had the complete gear by The North Face," he notes. "This was a serious climb so it was a good thing The North Face was there to help us out because being equipped with technology is definitely a factor to a successful climb."

This is the second expedition of Gardoce that The North Face has supported, the first being his climb of Mt. Ellvrus in Caucasus, Russia, the highest peak in Europe.

On to Everest

Generally, The North Face has set its sights on Mt. Everest and has focused the time Philippine team to climb the world's highest mountain. The team's 22 members, set to climb Mt. Everest in 2007, have just come back from India where they underwent training for two months. Their next stop is New Zealand where they will continue to practice alpine climbing.

For some members of the 88, however Philippine team, it was their first time to see snow while in India. It seems almost befitting that the name "The North Face" is found on the section that is the farthest hemisphere the north face of a mountain is generally the coldest, least and most formidable to climb, hence the most challenging.

Climbing Mt. Everest will surely be a challenge to Filipinos, but with strength and determination like Gardoce's, the Philippine 88 Everest team is sure to make it to the top and make the country proud.

It's about time a brand like The North Face made its way through the Philippines. With all our country has to offer in terms of natural landscape, it's almost a crime to while away time in the malls when there is so much out there to see and climb.

SHOES and bags were the first items to be sold in the Philippines.

THE NORTH Face carries everything relaxation, mountaineering, including accessories like scarves.